

# Modern Philology

VOLUME XVIII

October 1920

NUMBER 6

## THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS IN HERDER'S THOUGHT. II

### HERDER'S CRITICISM OF THE PRINCIPLE OF "IMITATION OF NATURE"

Under the rule of the imagination, which through the influence of the naturalistic philosophy had displaced the absolute reason of classicism, or rather pseudo-classicism, as the aesthetic faculty, Lessing concluded that modern art was no longer limited to the beauty of Greek art (wrongly regarded by him as absolute), but had gained for its range all "visible," i.e., concrete nature, of which beauty, in Boileau's sense, is only a small part. In selecting its objects of imitation from concrete nature, art must, however, use discretion. It must give preference to those objects and to those moments in the continuous sequence of events, which permit the most play to the imagination. It must choose the "pregnant" moment. Now, of all the possible moments, that of the culmination of an event is the least fitted to stimulate imagination. For whatever can be conceived as happening beyond that point must be inferior in intensity and interest.

Further, in art, a formal permanence is given to a passing moment. But no extreme stage can be regarded as enduring. De Lamettrie, who had himself portrayed as Democritus, the laughing philosopher, 289]

would on repeated view become more and more offensive. His laugh would gradually appear as a hideous grin. Similarly, an open-mouthed Laocoon would become disgusting; so would a raging Ajax and a Medea depicted in the act of murdering her children. The poet, on the other hand, whose means or "signs" of expression are not simultaneous as those of the artist, but successive, is not bound to one moment. He can proceed successively and cumulatively.

Herder points out the confusion involved in Lessing's demand for the choice of a moment which is not transitory. The only part of nature which is not transitory is dead nature. The life, the soul, of any object is manifest in its transitoriness. In limiting art to the intransitory parts of bodies we take from it *ihren besten Ausdruck*. "Whatever living (*seelenvollen*) expression," he argues, "we may imagine in any body, is always transitory. The more the body reveals a human passion, the more it represents a variable condition of human nature." He continues to prove that Lessing's "pregnant" moment is no more enduring than his climactic moment.

As well as I can say to a laughing Mettrie, on seeing him the third and fourth time and finding him still laughing: "Thou art a coxcomb," I can say to Myron's cow (a picture praised by Lessing): "Why doest thou keep on standing; why doest thou not go away?" For the same reason that I find a roaring Laocoon finally intolerable, I should also ultimately, if somewhat later, grow weary of a sighing Laocoon because he never stops sighing. Similarly, I should become bored with a standing Laocoon because he keeps on standing instead of sitting down; and also of a rose by Huisum (a noted painter of roses), because it keeps on blooming instead of withering.

In nature everything is transitory, passion of the soul and sensation of the body, activity of the soul and motion of the body: every state of finite and variable nature.

Thus every imitation of nature must as such be unnatural and irritating because it unnaturally prolongs a transitory moment.

From this Herder concludes that the true purpose of art cannot be objective at all but must be subjective. He rejects thereby the entire theory of imitation, which is fundamentally objective.

He now proceeds to apply this new principle to poetry and art by combining with it the Aristotelean distinction between "work"

and "energy."<sup>1</sup> A "work" embodies a complete idea in a definitive form. In the measure in which art succeeds in being such a "work," it is enduring, *ewig*. This use of the word *ewig* in the meaning of formal perfection is common to the great German writers of the last generation of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> It is the transcendentalistic, subjective conception of eternity. The artist is to portray not a moment in actual nature, for if literally permanent such a moment would be lifeless, but *den langen, seligen Ausdruck, the ewige Moment*, i.e., not an imitation of actuality but a synthesis which through its perfection prevents repeated observation from becoming tiresome and so has an abstract subjective element of permanence. The reason why the extreme moment in any action is not fitted for art is not that it is any more transitory than any other but that on repeated view it becomes empty and tiresome.

Poetry, on the other hand, and all the arts which produce their effects through the passing of moments in time, are forms of "energy" in the Aristotelean sense. These arts<sup>3</sup> must not, like pictorial art, aim at one complete and supreme moment which would absorb all our attention, but at an unbroken chain of actions of which each moment would be only one link and not a detached climax.

He then defines the "beautiful," which is the subject of pictorial art, as the quality which, by setting all its parts in a simultaneous harmony, makes the whole a fit object for the *ewige Anblick*.

But even this static beauty of pictorial art is, according to Herder, not an objective form as it is to Lessing, but a symbolic or characteristic expression of the nature of the human soul. It also is secondary to personality.

Physical beauty is not sufficient. For through our eyes there peers a soul, and therefore a soul must peer through the physical beauty portrayed

<sup>1</sup> This distinction between "work" and "energy" had been used before Herder by the English writer Harris.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Goethe's

"Er kann dem Augenblick  
Dauer verleihen."

in "Das Göttliche"; also "Dauer im Wechsel." See Introduction to my edition of *Goethe's Poems*, pp. lv f.

<sup>3</sup> "Müssen keinen Augenblick ein Höchstes liefern, wie auch unsre Seele in dies augenblickliche Höchstes verschlingen wollen, denn sonst wird eben die Annehmlichkeit gestört, die in der Folge, in der Verbindung und Abwechslung dieser Augenblicke und Handlungen beruht, und jeden Augenblick nur als ein Glied der Kette, nicht weiter, nutzt. Wird einer dieser Augenblicke, Zustände und Handlungen, eine Insel, ein abgetrenntes Höchstes, so geht das Wesen der energischen Kunst verloren."

for us. And in which state should this soul shine forth? Without doubt, in that which can sustain my view longest. And which is that? No state of idle calm which suggests nothing to me; none expressing itself in exaggerations, which would clip the wings of my imagination; but rather the motion which is, as it were, about to declare itself, the dawn of action which offers a view in both directions and thus presents in the inexhaustible wealth of its outlook, what may be called the "eternal view."<sup>1</sup>

#### PERSONALITY AT REST AND IN ACTION

The crisis of the conflict has now been reached in Herder's criticism of Lessing's application of the sensualistic theories to the techniques of poetry and art. Since, argues Lessing, the eye takes in objects simultaneously grouped in space, the "signs" of visual expression, which are the natural means of pictorial expression, as lines and colors (and values, of which Lessing and his literary contemporaries knew naught) are fit to "imitate" or represent objects only in the simultaneous spatial order. The "signs" of poetry, i.e., articulate sound, being successive,<sup>2</sup> can "imitate" objects only in the order of time.

Lessing illustrates these conclusions with some passages from the *Iliad* and the classical Greek tragedies, and with further conclusions drawn from the Laocoon group.

In his principal thesis Lessing states the fundamental difference between the two arts in question thus, that pictorial art "imitates" or represents one simultaneous static relation of objects in space, whereas poetry "imitates" successive objects occurring in time. The latter he calls actions. He finds this distinction borne out by two scenes in the *Iliad*, namely, the making of the bow of Pandarus and the council of the gods. He defines the former as a progressive visible action, the different parts of which occur consecutively in time; the latter as a static visible action, the different parts of which develop simultaneously (*nebeneinander*) in space. He proceeds to define "bodies" as "objects which or the parts of which coexist

<sup>1</sup> "... Sondern die sich gleichsam ankündigende Bewegung, die uns zu beiden Seiten hinschauen lässt und also einzig und allein ewigen Ausblick gewährt." Herder has a strong, poetical predilection for the moment of dawn, in its literal as well as metaphorical sense. Dawn is the mirror of youth to his ardent, ever-young spirit.

<sup>2</sup> And "arbitrary," i.e., symbolic in regard to their meaning. The distinction of "natural" and "arbitrary" "signs" played a considerable part in the aesthetic theories of Dubos and Harris and others. See p. 72, footnote.



simultaneously in space"; and "actions" as "objects which or whose parts occur successively in time." This limitation of poetry to "actions" is the result of the successive nature of its signs of expression. For in order to produce the illusion, the poet must adapt his imitation of objects to the successive order of expression imposed by the nature of his medium. Lessing applies this theory to an analysis of the Homeric description of the shield of Achilles, pointing out that the classical poet cast this description in the form of an account of the making of the shield. If, he concludes from that, a poet wishes to describe, he must follow the example of Homer and turn the static object in space, of which he wishes to produce a picture in the mind of his audience, into a succession of objects in time. He severely criticizes his contemporaries, especially Haller, for having written descriptive poetry.

This distinction between the two arts is crucial, and Herder's criticism of its various elements strikes at the foundations not only of Lessing's theories but of the entire complex tradition on which they rest, and at the same time lays down the foundations of his own theories. Herder corrects Lessing's definition of action by pointing out that "the idea of succession is only a part of the idea of action. Only succession produced by a spontaneous force (*Successives durch Kraft*)<sup>1</sup> is action." Succession is a pure abstraction, whereas action is a concrete embodiment of a living force.<sup>2</sup>

Lessing, by pushing his sensualistic theories too far, confounds the sequence of verbal sounds with the associations of images and ideas, which are the true objects of poetic discourse. These ideas, while perceived by means of a succession of sounds, yet follow a principle of association independent of those sounds. This principle must be embodied in the spontaneous forces which turn succession into action. Herder calls the associative bond "coherence of imaginative ideas (*zusammenhängende Bildergriffe*).

It is therefore wrong to limit poetry to succession in time. For, though uttered in succession, it yet belongs also to space because

<sup>1</sup> *Kraft* to Herder meant a spontaneous principle, as will be shown later.

<sup>2</sup> "Ich denke nur ein in der Zeitfolge wirkendes Wesen, ich denke nur Veränderungen, die durch die Kraft einer Substanz [the Leibnizian monad!] aufeinanderfolgen: so wird Handlung. Und sind Handlungen der Gegenstand der Dichtkunst, so wette ich, wird dieser Gegenstand nie aus dem trocknen Begriffe der Succession bestimmt werden können."

it is concrete action. Poetry thus being at home both in the spheres of time and space is the "discourse of perfect sensibility" (*sinnlich vollkommne Rede*).

Herder adds that Lessing's argument fails also because it proves too much. For if the succession of the sounds of speech determined the sequence of ideas, then prose and every form of scientific discourse would also have to forego description—which is absurd.

Herder now develops his own theory in an analysis of the Homeric accounts of the assembling of Juno's chariot by Hebe, of the making of the bow of Pandarus, and of the fashioning of the shield of Achilles by Vulcan.

The "action" of Hebe's putting together the chariot of Juno (*Iliad* E 722–31) is so detailed and gradual that by the time the last part is added the hearer has forgotten the first. If the poet had aimed at giving a picture of the chariot as a whole, i.e., if his action had served the purpose of description or imitation of an object, his method would have been unsuccessful.

Next, as to the bow of Pandarus, he says:

If Homer, in order to depict the bow of Pandarus, has first to make us follow the hunt of the ibex from whose horns the bow is to be made; has to show us the rock where Pandarus kills his game, and how he measures the length of the horns; then takes us to the craftsman and makes us witness every detail of the manufacture of the bow—how can anyone conclude from this that Homer had intended to have the succession of the events of his narrative, as it were, coincide with the conditions of coexistence in space, by making the description of the different parts of the bow keep pace with the progress of his discourse? It is impossible to assume that Homer, unless one regards him as a bungler, intended a description of the bow.

Herder's interpretation of the story is the following: Homer is not concerned with the description of the bow as such. He tells progressive actions because he has to keep pace with the general progress of his main action. He only acquaints us with the bow of Pandarus so far as the associations awakened by the bow are essential to the progress of his story. We learn the story of the bow not to be interested in its details as such, but to gain a conception, the most vivid, concrete, forceful conception possible, of the prowess of Pandarus, the might of his arm, the strength of the bow, and the terrible possibilities of his use of it. "When Pandarus now takes the bow,

draws the string, places the arrow, releases the string—woe to Menelaus struck by an arrow from such a bow! We know!"

Homer does not intend to give a picture of a "work" but an account of an "energy"; he is not concerned with the bow as an independent object, but chiefly as an appropriate dramatic symbol of an action involving its owner and its victim.

Similarly, the putting together of the chariot of Juno by Hebe does not serve the purpose of description. Hebe, a goddess, is not put to the pains of a minutely detailed task, in order that we may have a complete, simultaneous visual picture of a lifeless object, but in order that we gain a vivid impression of the excellence, the perfection of the parts, the value, the importance symbolized by the exquisite care bestowed by Hebe, a goddess, on the conveyance worthy of the queen of the Olympians. Homer did not aim at description of an object, but at an account of a characteristic and interesting action involving beautiful and momentous personalities.

The true poetic purpose of the story of the shield of Achilles is similar. The greatest hero of the Trojan War is in need of a shield; Thetis, his mother, a goddess, begs one of Vulcan, another god. He promises, rises, goes to work. "The whole scene is part of the action of the poem, of the progress of the epic," and is in no way an instance of a manner peculiar to Homer.

In the making, in the growth, of the shield, there lies all the power of the "energy," the continuous process determined by a living force, which is the poet's aim. In every figure which Vulcan engraves upon the shield, I admire the creative god, in every indication of the proportions and the surface I recognize the mighty shield which is to serve Achilles, and for which the reader, absorbed in the action, longs as eagerly as Thetis.

Herder continues,

In short, I know no successions in Homer, which had to serve as artifices, as makeshifts, in the place of descriptions or static pictures. These successions are the essence of his poem, they are the body of epic action. . . . If Homer requires a physical picture he describes it, even if it is a Thersites; he wots not of artifices, of poetic tricks or hazards; progress is the soul of his epic.

Herder's method of attack is that of individualizing essential features, which Lessing had failed to analyze. He overcomes

Lessing by proof of overgeneralization. He shows that in the discussion of the Greek idea of beauty, in the definition of the synthetic moment, which is the proper subject of pictorial art, in the definition of action as identical with succession, in the identification of the successive nature of the sounds of speech with the order of association of ideas, Lessing failed to take into account the one essential factor common to all these matters, namely, individual personality. He concludes that personality must be the essential principle of poetry and art.

He did not at this time see the full theoretic significance of his idea, which required some ten years to reach maturity. At the time of our *Wäldchen* he was still strongly under the influence of Leibnitz. In his endeavor to give his conclusion theoretic unity and the proper philosophical form of generalization, he borrowed from Leibnitz the term "force" (*Kraft*), which expresses the active element of the monad, Leibnitz' embodiment of the primary, absolute, unchangeable, and irreplaceable principle of spontaneous individuality. The fundamental importance of this conception lies in the fact that in Leibnitz' philosophy for the first time in modern thought the principle of personality is opposed to the objective absolute reason of French rationalism and the objective—and equally absolute!—nature of the British realism of Bacon and Locke as the primary fact of reality.

This principle appears in the more concrete form of *Naturwüchsigkeit* (native spontaneity), as the central idea in the thought of Bodmer and Breitinger.

This idea, far deeper and broader than the more limited conception of Rousseau, which involves rather the more primary impulses and emotions together with personifications of the inanimate forces of nature, than the complete human personality, is the particular philosophical contribution of the German mind to the thought of the eighteenth century. This is the fundamental motive in Herder's entire work. It is the more unfortunate that German systematic philosophy was for generations diverted from its most characteristic heritage by the masterfully keen, but narrow, dry, and too featureless genius of Kant, who turned the vigorous fresh current into the formalism of Cartesian rationalism, methodologically qualified by

psychological infusion drawn from Berkeley and Hume. Abandoned by Kant, this immensely fruitful idea was left to the violent and immature conceit of the Storm and Stress movement which caricatured it, and to the morbid egoism of the Romantic movement which perverted it. Even in the classical decade beginning in 1790, the rationalistic influence, as will be shown in a later chapter, frustrated many of its vital impulses.

This idea persists throughout Herder's life, forming the fundamental motive of all his important theories: That the world of all reality, as well as that of art and poetry, consists primarily of individuals, not one of which is like any other, and each of which is necessary to the whole and must preserve its essential character. This is the essence of Herder's humanism.

To return to the specific question, individual personality is the primary fact of aesthetic reality. The aim of all the arts is "truth and expressiveness" (*Wahrheit und Ausdruck*) of personality. All other facts, external objects, abstract ideas as well as the forms and techniques, are conditioned by this. "Imitation" thus loses significance as a principle and becomes a secondary form of expression. Poetry is at liberty to use either description or succession to suit its main purpose. Not description as such is wrong, but description in the wrong place and manner.<sup>1</sup>

Under the theory of personality there can be no absolute, universal, necessary beauty, but only relative appropriateness as an expression of a specific form of personality. Art and poetry are not interested in the representation of objects except inasmuch as they serve to characterize individuality.

This is not merely a correction and qualification of details of Lessing's doctrine, but an original and fundamentally new orientation in reality.

The chief difficulties inherent in Herder's view will be discussed in a later chapter.

It is no longer necessary henceforth to discuss Lessing's theories in detail. Herder's criticism has taken away their foundations. We shall limit ourselves to a brief summary of the remaining main

<sup>1</sup> See also chapter xviii of the *Waldchen*, which contains Herder's summary of his conclusions regarding "energy" in poetry.

theses of Herder's essay, which easily reveal their significance, because they are simple applications of his fundamental idea of personality.

"GODS AND MENTAL BEINGS, PERSONIFIED ABSTRACTIONS"

Lessing, following the rationalistic logic, had assumed that the gods represented in pictorial art are personified abstractions. To the painter, "Venus is nothing except love." Poetry, on the other hand, treats gods like beings in action (*handelnde Wesen*).

Herder, in chapter xi, puts this subject also on the proper ground. The poets, he says, were the makers of mythology. Homer's gods are "heavenly individuals," which have added to them certain typical characters. They are "not," as Lessing asserts, "merely beings in action, which, in addition to their general characters, have other traits and emotions, which may according to circumstance, predominate over the former"; but "their true nature consists in those other traits and emotions, whereas their general character is only a later generalization of those individual traits. This generalization is incomplete and subordinate and is often not taken into consideration by the poets," who are interested in individuals. "If pictorial art has to give its gods typical rather than individual characters, it does not manifest thereby its essence but its mechanical limitations." Venus, for instance, is not limited to "typical" actions. She may rave and rage; she is still no abstraction of love but the goddess of love, the mother of Cupid, the woman in love, in concrete reality."

The actions of the gods as well as of human individuals reveal their characters. Therefore pictorial poetry, illustrated by Horace, is weak.<sup>1</sup> Poetry has more direct symbols of action than art.

In judging of the size and the appearance of gods in Homer we must consider first not general ideas but their individual characters. *Charakter ist hier über Gottheit*; i.e., individuality is here above type.

There follow in chapter xv in a discussion of translations from Homer very interesting stylistic remarks, the main significance of which from our point of view is the principle of individuality applied

<sup>1</sup> The chief advocate of pictorial poetry in the eighteenth century was Daniel Webb, whereas the French writer Caylus advised the artists to "imitate" passages from the classical poets.

to style. One of the most characteristic elements of Homer's style he finds in "a certain manner of repeating some principal feature that had appeared before and now serves as a means for continuing the picture and binding into unity different sections which otherwise would fall apart."<sup>1</sup>

Lessing overgeneralized not only in dealing with the relations between art and poetry, but even in his analysis of poetry as such. On the premise that Homer depicts progressive actions, Lessing concludes that poetry as such is limited to actions. Herder applies his method of individuation to this subject also. Part of the passage is so characteristic that it invites literal transcription: "Homer creates in narration: 'it occurred! it came into being!' Everything with him can therefore be action and must hasten on to action. That is the aim of the energy of his Muse. Marvelous, pathetic events are his world. His word of creation says: 'It came into being.'" But "Anacreon hovers between song and narrative. His story becomes a song; his little song an epic of the god of love. He can choose this turn: 'it was,' or 'I will,' or 'thou shalt'—enough if his *melos* resounds with joy and pleasure; a lofty emotion is the energy of each one of his songs." Pindar, the odic singer, has still another purpose: "A poetic picture, in which is visible everywhere, not the work of art as such but the artist: 'Behold me, singing'!"

He sums up:

Where can there be a comparison? The total production of Homer, Anacreon, Pindar, how different! How unlike the achievement they intend! The one narrates; the whole of the event is his aim; he is the poet of the past. The other one does not intend to speak; joy itself sings through him; the complete expression of a delightful sensation is his purpose. The third speaks that we hear him; the whole of his ode is very skilful and symmetrical structure.

It is therefore wrong to regard as Lessing does the work of one poet, no matter how great, as embodying the rules of all poetry. Each type of poetry, each individual poet must be judged on the basis of particular character, gifts, and purposes.

The last part of the *Wäldchen*, beginning with chapter xxi, is devoted to the discussion of the ugly and the disgusting. The

<sup>1</sup> "... ein gewisses Wiederkommen auf einen Hauptzug, der schon da war und jetzt das Band sein soll, um das Bild weiter zu führen und die auseinander fallenden Züge zu einem Ganzen zu verknüpfen."



details do not concern us here. But the ground on which his conclusions rest is important. It is another logical application of his principle of personality. Lessing followed the rationalistic theory in regarding ugliness as an absolute formal principle expressing the negation of the classical idea of the beautiful. He analyzed the term no more than he did that of the beautiful. Herder, having subordinated formal absolute beauty to personality, proceeded likewise with that of the ugly. Ugly is that which embodies an ugly personality. Lessing, bound by the rationalistic theory that the Greeks did not portray ugliness, had been hard put to it in accounting for Thersites in the *Iliad*. His final solution, which was an evasion (but an evasion forced upon the whole pseudo-classicism, which he followed), is that ugliness might serve the purposes of humor. "Homer made Thersites ugly in order to make him ridiculous." Herder, on the other hand, proves that Homer was very much in earnest in creating Thersites. Thersites "is not a ridiculous but a malicious, snarling rascal; he has the blackest soul of all the men before Troy." He is made more contemptible by having to suffer a trouncing at the hands of Ulysses. That by taking himself seriously he now and then makes himself ridiculous is true; but this ludicrousness is only a secondary quality in him.

Lessing, as pseudo-classicists generally, was forced by his absolute formalism to derive the conception of the terrible as well as the ridiculous from the ugly. Herder calls attention to the beauty of certain forms of homeliness based on character. He also shows that the ridiculous need not be ugly. Nor is the "terrible," which Lessing defined as the "dangerously ugly," dependent on ugliness. The Homeric gods are terrible, but certainly not ugly.

The expression of specific personalities, either in a static simultaneous form in space or in a continuous progressive action in time, is the subject of all art and poetry; that is the thesis of Herder's first *Waldchen*.

The immediate questions arising from Herder's main conclusion are whether and in what respects personality is the measure, not only of the works created by art and poetry, but also of the poet and artist, and of the public which is both audience and creative environment

of the author and his works. As to the *significance of the thing created*, Herder is most explicit. The subject of art is an individual personality. The objects and events are not primarily introduced as parts of objective reality, but as subordinate manifestations of personality. They are part of the machinery of characterization and not imitations of objects of nature. They are, as Herder saw clearly and showed in his analysis of the Homeric stories of the bow of Pandarus, the chariot of Juno, and the shield of Achilles, not primary, but symbolic in their significance.

Herder's sound sense of reality kept him from pressing the symbolic function of objective reality too far. It was left to the Romantic movement to develop this symbolic part of objectivity into a subjective monism, in order to remove all obstacles from a vision of a universal absolute force of personality, and so, by ignoring the objective relations of personality, to destroy that also.

Herder, however, was somewhat lacking in the formal sense, both in composition and in style, and his ear was not sensitive to the finest music and cadences of diction. Though in this respect far in advance of his contemporaries among the aesthetical critics and of most of the poets as well, it becomes now and then obvious that he does not make a clear distinction between the natural truth of characters portrayed and the artistic truth which produces focus in a work of art. His conception of the "energy" as a continuous expression of individualities leads him to neglect the requirements of constructive unity.

There is one aspect of this question of which Herder was at this time apparently unconscious, namely, the part of personality in a work of art treating of inanimate nature, i.e., of landscape art. Herder, at the time of the first *Wäldchen* knew nothing of landscape painting, and never had much opportunity and inclination to study it. Even the poetical aspects of external nature had not, at this time, revealed themselves to him to any significant extent. His nature-sense did not awaken until a few years later during the solitude and homesickness of his Bückeberg days. But after that time, he gave his conception of personality a remarkable extension by including in it a symbolic interpretation of nature, which in beauty,

magnificence, and penetration has not been surpassed in critical literature. This will appear in the discussion of his *Geist der Ebräischen Poesie*.

Herder has indicated his conclusions regarding the relativity of the significance of works of art and poetry with regard to the personalities of their creators, in his rejection of Lessing's attempt to make Homer the standard of all poetry, and in his differentiation of Homer, Anacreon, and Pindar. Individualization of each creative genius in each particular work is his critical aim. It also is his particular gift, in which he surpassed all the men of his era. Unequaled in sympathetic discernment, the rarest gift of the creative critic, Herder became the greatest and most fruitful interpreter of poetry and of the humanistic movements of history, in which a fine and profound sense of the creative personality is the chief requirement. This gift of individualization will be discussed in detail in connection with his works on folk poetry, on the forces determining the subjects and character of poetry, on translations, on genius and related subjects, and on the *Ideen* and the *Humanitätsbriefe*.

The relations of the public to the works of art and poetry can be discussed to better advantage in a later chapter, in which Herder's views on the influence of environment on personality are interpreted.

Another important question is that of the specific formal elements pertaining to his conception of beauty as conditioned by personality. Herder was occupied with it at the time of our *Wäldchen*, and reached interesting and important conclusions. These will be presented in a later chapter devoted to Herder's theories regarding the forces which determine personality and so control its valuation.

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#### NOTE

We regret that irregularity in the mail service and editorial oversight occasioned in the June instalment of this article the following typographical errors: p. 1, l. 16, read the for an before absolute; p. 2, l. 19, supply comma after *Ideen*; p. 4, l. 22, omit the after of and read achievement for achievements; p. 4, l. 29, read is for in before his; p. 8, footnote, read Stein for Hein and insert "op. cit." after Howard; p. 9, l. 1, read dangers for angers; p. 9, l. 10, read Holbach for Holboch; p. 9, l. 30, supply commas after but and were, and read by the processes of for in accordance with; p. 10, l. 8, read Mars for "Mars"; pp. 10 ff., read Laocoon for Laokoon except in title of Lessing's work; p. 10, footnote, read Batteux for Batteaux.

## GERMANIC *w*-GEMINATION. II

### GERM. *-dw-: -dd-*

68. ME. *dudd*, *dudde* 'a coarse cloak,' NE. *duds* 'clothes' (used disparagingly), OHG *tutta* (*tuta*), *tutto* (*tuto*) 'Brustwarze, weibl. Brust,' Norw. *dodd* 'tuft, wisp; heap,' early Du. *dodde* 'Stengel, Stift,' Du. *dodde* 'liebkosende Benennung für ein Kind,' from \**ḍuḍw-*: Norw. *dott* 'tuft; heap,' *dotta* 'pile in little heaps,' *dytta* 'stop up, make tight; dam up; cram, pack,' OE. *dyttan* 'shut (ears); stop (mouth)'; OS. *dodro*, OHG. *totoro* 'Dotter,' NHG. Styr. *tudel* 'kurzes, dickes Weib; Puppe,' Skt. *dúḍhitāḥ* 'dick, dicht, steif,' *dudhrāḥ* 'steif, störrig' (cf. *Mod. Phil.*, XI, 333). Cf. No. 26.

69. Norw. *krodde* 'Käse von eingekochter Milch,' ME. *crudde* 'curds,' Germ. \**kruḍw-*, \**kruḍu-*: Ir. *gruth* (\**grutu-*) 'geronnene Milch, Quark' (Fick, II<sup>4</sup>, 119; III<sup>4</sup>, 54).

70. OE. *codd* 'bag; cod, shell, husk,' ON. *kodde* 'cushion,' OSwed. *kodde* 'Hode,' MDu. *codde idem*, from \**kuḍwa-n-*: Lat. *guttus* 'a vessel for liquids,' \**gutuos* 'round object,' Goth. *qīpus* (\**gyetus*) 'belly,' OE. *cwidele* 'inflamed swelling,' *cēod* 'pouch, vessel.' Cf. No. 25.

71. MHG. *ratte* 'Kornrade, agrostemma,' NHG. Swiss, Bav. *ratte*, Germ. stem \**rēḍwan-*, \**raḍwan-*: early NHG. *ratwen*, OHG. *rāto*, OLG. *rāda* (cf. Fick, III<sup>4</sup>, 337).

72. OE. *ruddoc*, ME. *ruddok*, NE. dial. *ruddock* 'robin redbreast,' Germ. \**ruḍwaka-*: Lith. *rudugys* 'September,' *rudūti* 'rötlichbraun werden,' *rudāvimas* 'das Braunwerden,' *ruduszis* 'Rotaugen, cyprinus rutilus,' *rūdas* 'rötlich braun,' OE. *rudu* 'red color, rouge; redness.'

73. OE. *pudd* 'ditch,' Germ. \**puḍwa-*: Gr. *βυσσός* 'the depths of the sea' (\**budhysós* or \**budhysós*), *βύσσαλοι-βόθοι* Hes., *βυθός* 'the depth, esp. of the sea,' *βύθως* 'in the deep, sunken, deep,' *τὰ βύθια* 'water-animals,' *βυθίζω* 'immerse, sink,' ME. *podel* 'puddle,' base \**budh-* 'press down; sink; press, pack, cram, make big; swell, etc.,' also in the following (cf. IE. *a*<sup>2</sup> 51).

74. MDu. *podde* 'toad,' *puddē* 'eel-pout,' Westfal. *puddēk* 'lump, pudding, sausage,' NE. *pudding*, *poddy* 'round and stout in the belly,' LG. *puddig* 'thick, swollen,' Germ. *puđwa-* 'swollen; swelling, lump': OE. *puđoc* 'wen, wart,' NE. dial. *puđ* 'paw,' MLG. *puđel* 'Dose, Beutel.' Cf. No. 28.

75. Norw. dial. *skadda*, *skodda* 'Nebel' (ON. \**skadda*, gen. \**skopddu*), MHG. *schatte* (*schate*) 'Schatten,' Germ. \**skadwa-* and *skadu-*: Goth. *skadus* 'shadow,' OHG. *scato*, gen. *scatuwes*, Gr. *σκότος* 'darkness' (cf. Fick, III, 449).

76. OE. *sceadd* 'shad, clupea alosa,' Norw. *skadd* 'kleiner Schnäpel,' Germ. \**skadwa-* 'thin, pointed': OE. *scæþþa* 'nail' (No. 61). For meaning compare NHG. *schnäpel* 'der Fisch salmo laveretus, mit sich schnabelartig spitzig verlängernder Schnauze.' To this primary meaning the use of NE. *shad* points: *shad-bird* 'the common American snipe; the common European sandpiper' (both birds so called from their pointed bills, not "with reference to their appearance at the shad-fishing season," which might apply to many other birds); *shad-bellied* 'thin-bellied,' the opposite of *pot-bellied*.

These are from a pre-Germ. stem \**skhatu-* 'strip, thin piece,' Goth. *skapuls* 'schädlich,' *skapjan* 'schaden,' Gr. *ἀσκηθής* 'unharméd,' root \**skhē-i-*: Skt. *chyāti* 'schneidet ab,' pp. *chātah*, *chitāh*, Gr. *σχάσις* 'a pricking, scarifying,' *σχάω* 'split' (*σχίζω*, Skt. *chinātti*, Lat. *scindo*, etc.), *σχάζω* 'slit, lance; burst open (of flowers),' *σχαστήριον* 'lancet': ON. *skata* 'Glattrochen,' Norw. *skata* 'Elster' ("nach dem spitz auslaufenden Schwanz benannt," Fick, III, 448), *skata* 'in eine Spitze hinauslaufen,' *skat* 'Wipfel eines Baumes,' Swed. dial. *skate* 'etwas Hervorspringendes, Wipfel, Landspitze.'

GERM. -*kw-*: -*kk-*

77. OHG. *acchus*, *accus*, *ackes* 'ax,' Germ. \**akwisjō-*, *akwizjō-*: Goth. *agizi* 'ax.' With *i*-syncopation also WGerm. \**akus-* in OS., OLFranc. *acus*, OHG. *achus*, whence the *u* in *acchus* for \**acchis*.

78. OHG. *nackot* 'nackt,' ON. *nōkkueðr*, *nōkkueðr* idem, etc., Germ. \**nakwiða-*, \**nakwaða-*, Goth. *naqaps*, etc. (pre-Germ. \**nog<sup>u</sup>-odho-*, -*edho-* 'nudus'), whence later also by syncope \**nakuða-*: MSwed. *nakudher*, OE. *nacod*, OHG. *nahhut*, etc.

79. ON. *nþkkue* 'Nachen,' stem *\*nakwan-* and, with loss of *w*, *\*nakan* in OE. *naca*, OS. *naco*, OHG. *nahho*.

80. ON. *slþkkua* (*slþkua*) 'löschen, stillen,' *\*slakwian*, pre-Germ. *\*sloqy-*: Lat. *languéo*, Gr. *λαγὰρός*, ON. *slakr* 'slack' (cf. Walde<sup>2</sup>, 410).

81. OHG. *nicchessa*, MHG. *nickes* 'Nix,' *\*nikwes-* (and *\*nikus-*, *nikuz* in OHG. *nihhus*, ON. *nykr*, OE. *nicor*), pre-Germ. *\*nig<sup>u</sup>es-*, Gr. *νίջω*, fut. *νίψω* 'wash.'

82. ON. *rþókk* 'darkness': Goth. *rigis idem*, Gr. *ἐρεβός*, Skt. *rājah*.

83. OIcel. *vþkkua* 'zum Fliessen bringen,' ONorw. pres. *vækkir*: ON. *vþkr* 'feucht,' from *\*vakuz*, Germ. *\*wakwaz*, IE. *\*uog<sup>u</sup>o-*, Lat. *ūvidus*, Gr. *ὕγρός* 'wet.'

84. ME. *wricen*, NE. dial. *wrick* 'twist, turn,' Swed. *vricka*, Dan. *vrikke* 'move, turn, wriggle, sprain,' Du., LG. *wriken* 'move to and fro,' -*kk-* from -*kw-*: Goth. *wraigs*. Or in this case -*kk-* may be from -*kn<sup>z</sup>*: Gr. *ῥικνός* 'bent.'

85. ON. acc. *kuikkuan*, *kykkuan* 'living' (nom. *kuikr* from *\*kwikur*, OE. *cwicu*, Germ. stem *\*kwikwa-*, pre-Germ. *\*g<sup>u</sup>ig<sup>u</sup>o-*, Lett. *dfiga* 'life,' cf. Walde<sup>2</sup>, 846), OHG. *quek*, gen. *queckes*, OLFr. *quicca fē* 'live stock.'

86. ON. *þykk*, *þiukkr* 'thick,' OE. *þicce*, OFries. *thikke*, OS. *thikki*, OHG. *dicchi*, etc., Germ. *\*þekwa-* (*\*þeku*): Ir. *tiug* (*\*tegu-*) 'thick.'

87. OE. *þaccian* 'pat, flap,' Nlcel. *þjökka* 'schlagen, klopfen': OS. *thako-lon* 'streicheln,' *\*þaku-lōn*, Lat. *tango*, Gr. *τεταγών* (cf. Fick, III<sup>4</sup>, 565).

88. OE. *haccian* 'hack,' *\*hakwōn*, OFris. *tōhahkia* 'zerhacken,' MLG., MHG. *hacken*, *hacke* 'Hacke': MHG. *hachel*, *hechel* 'Hechel,' NE. *hatchel*, *hetchel*, *heckle* 'comb for flax or hemp,' verb 'comb, as flax or hemp; tease with questions,' OE. *haca* 'hook,' *hacod* 'pike (fish),' OS. *hacud idem*.

89. OE. *sæcce* acc. 'quarrel, strife,' WGerm. *\*sakwa*, Germ. *\*sakwō*: OE. nom. *sacu*, WGerm. *\*sak(w)u*, Germ. *\*sakwō*, pre-Germ. *\*(p)sog-yā-*: Goth. *saku-ls* 'streitsüchtig,' *sakan* 'streiten,' OHG. *sahhan* 'tadeln, schelten, vor Gericht streiten,' ON. *saka* 'injure; blame, find fault with,' Gr. *ψόγος* 'blame, censure,' *ψέγω* 'lessen, disparage, blame,' Skt. *psāti* 'zehrt auf, zerkaut,' etc. These

are to be separated from OE. *forsacan* 'forsake, relinquish; refuse; deny,' OHG. *forsahhan* 'refuse; deny,' Goth. *sōkjan* 'seek,' etc.

GERM. -hw-: -hh-

90. OHG. *ahha* (*aha*) 'aqua': Goth. *aŕva*; *fīrlīche* (*fīrlīhe*) 'verleihe': Goth. *leiŕvai*; *nāhhitun* 'nahten': Goth. *nēŕvidēdun*; *sehhan* 'sehen,' *sāhhun* 'sahen' (here analogical): Goth. *saiŕvan*, *sēŕvun* (cf. Braune, *Ahd. Gram.*, § 154, Anm. 6).

91. OE. *tiohhian*, Angl. *tihhian* (*\*tīhwōjan*) 'arrange; determine, consider' (Bülbring, § 541), to which add the geminated MHG. *zechen* 'fügen, anordnen, schaffen, veranstalten; zechen' (OHG. *\*zehhōn*, *zehōn*), *zeche* 'Anordnung, Reihenfolge, Zunft, Zechgesellschafft,' MLG. *teche*, *techge*, *teghe idem*, Goth. *tēwa* 'Ordnung,' pre-Germ. *\*dēky-*: Serb.-Cr. *u-dešavati*, *-desiti* 'richten, zurecht machen; treffen,' OBulg. *desiti* 'finden,' Lat. *decet*, *decus*, Skt. *daçasyāti* 'erweist Ehre, ist gnädig,' *dāçati* 'erweist Verehrung, gewährt.'

92. OE. *ceahhettan* 'laugh loudly,' *\*kahwatjan* (Bülbring, § 541), from an OE. *\*ceahhian* preserved in NE. *chaff* 'assail with sarcastic banter or ridicule, make game of, banter, ridicule,' sb. 'banter, ridicule,' MHG. *kach* 'lautes Lachen' (*\*kahwa-*), *kachen*, *kachzen*, OHG. *kachazzen*, *kahhazzen* 'laut lachen.'

93. OE. *cohhetan* 'cough; shout,' *\*kuhwatjan*, *\*cohhian*, *\*cūhhian*, ME. *coghen*, *coughen* (*couwen*), NE. *cough* (*kəf*), MDu. *cochen*, *cuchen* 'cough, wheeze; groan,' LG. *kuchen*, *küchen* 'keuchen,' MHG. *küchen idem*.

94. OE. *seohhe* 'strainer, Seihe,' *\*sihwōn-* (Bülbring, § 541), MLG. *sigge* (*sīge*, *sie*) 'Seihe,' *siggen* (*sīgen*, *sien*) 'seihen' (or these with -gg- from -gw-), NHG. Tyrol. *seichen* 'seihen,' MDu. *sichene* 'Sieb,' and perhaps also *sichten* 'sichten; seihen' (*\*sihwatjan*?), IE. root *\*seiq<sup>h</sup>*.

95. OE. *geneahhe* 'sufficiently; frequently,' *\*nahwē*, *\*nokwēd*: Lith. *naszūs* 'gute Früchte tragend, fruchtbar,' *nēszi* 'tragen,' Lat. *nanciscor* 'reach,' Goth. *ganah* 'genügt,' etc., and probably *nēŕvs* 'nahe.'

96. MDu. *crochen* 'groan, moan,' Du. dial. *krochen*, *kruchen* 'groan; wheeze,' MLG. *krochen* 'grunzen, krächzen,' *\*kruhw-*: Gr. γρῖζω 'grunt, mutter,' γρυκρός 'to be muttered.'

97. OE. *pohha* 'pouch, bag,' *\*puhwan-* 'swelling,' MLG. *poche* (and *pocke*) 'Blatter, Pustel,' *puchen* (*puggen*) 'pochen, trotzen,' MDu. *pochen puchen* 'bacchari, debacchari; tonare murmure et



verberibus; et jactare, jactitare': *pogge* 'toad' (\**pugw-*), Gr. *βυκάρη* 'trumpet,' Russ.-Ch.Sl. *bučati* 'dröhnen,' Pol. *buczec* 'brüllen, tönen, weinen,' *buczyć się* 'sich aufblasen,' *buczny* 'stolz, prahlerisch; übermütig,' etc. (cf. Berneker, I, 98 f.). In this group occur the geminations *kk*, *hh*, *gg*.

98. WS., Kent. *geohhol*, Angl. *gehhol* 'Yule, Christmas' and WS., Kent. *hweohhol* 'wheel' are given in Bülbring, *Ae. El.*, § 543, as examples of "Dehnung vor l." But both of these words had an *h* followed by *w*, and this was the cause of the gemination. For *geohhol* represents Germ. \**jehwla-*, while *gēol* 'Yule,' *gēola* 'December,' Goth. *jiuleis idem* are from \**je(g)wl-*, IE. \**ǵeqʷlo-*: Gr. *ἐψία* 'sport, game, amusement' (cf. Boisacq, s.v.). So also *hweohhol*; *hweog(u)l*, *hweowol*, *hwēol* come from \**hwehwla-*; \**hwegwla-*: Skt. *cakrām* 'wheel.'

99. OHG. *nihhein*, *nechein*, *nohhein*, 'keiner'; *dihhein*, *dehhein*, *dechein* (*thegein*), *thohhein* 'irgend ein' are explained as having "secondary gemination" from original *nihein*, *dihein*, etc., in which *h* was final and therefore a spirant (*nih-ein*), but in composition was drawn over in part to the second syllable (*nih-hein*), and so properly written as a gemination (cf. Braune, *Ahd. Gr.*, § 154, Anm. 6). This explanation would imply the formation of *nihhein*, etc., in OHG. from *nih* and *ein*. The compounds must have been much earlier (:OS. *nigēn*, *negēn*), and as collocations even pre-Germ. *Nihhein* represents Germ. \**nehwe ainaz* 'neque unus'; *nohhein* (which need not be regarded as having *o* for *e* in the proclitic position, Braune, § 29, Anm. 3) from \**nuhwe ainaz*: OHG. *noch* 'neque,' probably identical with *noh*, Goth. *nauh* 'noch, adhuc,' with the negative force derived from its use with *ni*, and also influenced by *nih*. Or *noh* 'neque' may come from \**n-u-qʷe:n* from \**ene* 'not,' Lat. *nē*, *ne-*, and also *in-* 'un-,' Gr. *ἀν-* (*n-*), *ἀ-* (*η-*); *-u-*, perhaps an ablaut form of Lat. *-ve*, *vē-*, OBulg. *u-* (Gr. *οὐ*?), and added to the negative in Gr. *ἀνευ* 'without' (\**n-eu*), Goth. *inu* (\**en-u*), OHG. *āno* (\**ēn-ou*). *Dihhein*, *dehhein* 'irgend ein' comes from Germ. \**pehwe ainaz*, pre-Germ. \**teqʷe* 'irgend,' stem \**to-*, \**te-*, whence also \**te-s* in Goth. *þis-hun* 'μάλιστα,' *-þvaduþ* 'whithersoever,' *-þvaz* 'whatever,' *-þvaruþ* 'wherever,' *-þvazuþ* 'whoever.' Similarly *thohhein* is formed from a \**tu-qʷe*, which is also in OHG. *doh* 'doch,' from an IE. stem \**tu*, *tu-*: Skt. *tvā-h*, *tva-h* 'mancher, der eine,' *ā* 'doch, nun, aber,' OE. *þus* 'thus, so,' etc.

100. OE. *\*rohhe*, *reohhe* 'a fish' (-*ēo*-?), MDu. *rochche*, *roche*, *rochghe*, *rogghe* 'roach' (sea-fish), MLG. *roche*, *ruce* *idem*, NE. *rough* (raf) 'rauh,' implying OE. *\*rūhh*, Germ. *\*rūhwa-n-*: OE. *rūh* 'shaggy, hairy, rough,' *rȳhæ*, *rȳe*, *rēowe* 'blanket, rug,' OLG. *rūgi*, *rāwi* 'rauhes Fell,' OHG. *rūh* 'haaricht, struppig,' NHG. *rauch* 'mit Haaren, Federn, Stacheln bewachsen,' *rauchware* 'Pelzware,' pre-Germ. *\*rūqwo-* 'rough, broken,' *\*ruq-* 'pull, tear, break': Lat. *runco* 'pull out, weed,' Gr. *ῥυκάων* 'plane,' Skt. *luñcāti* 'rauft, rauft aus, rupft, enthülst,' *rūkṣāḥ* 'rauh,' etc. For meaning compare Lat. *rumpo*: Lith. *rupas* 'rauh, höckerig, holprig.'

GERM. -*gu-*, -*gw-*: -*gg-*

101. OE. *mæcgas* 'boys,' Germ. *\*magwōs*: nom. *magu*, Goth. *magus* (cf. Kluge *Pauls Grdr.*, I<sup>2</sup>, 379; Bülbring, *Ae. El.*, § 541). Unfortunately this is not conclusive, since *mæcg-* may rather represent WGerm. *\*magj-*, which would regularly occur in the loc. sing. and the nom. plur.: Germ. *\*magiwi*; *\*magiwiz*, OHG. *suniu*, later *suni*; Goth. *magjus*, *sunjus*, OHG. *suni*.

102. ME. *schoggen*, 'shake, agitate,' Norw. dial. *skygg* 'scheu, furchtsam,' Germ. *\*skugwia-*, Swed. *skygga* 'scheu werden': MHG. *schiuhen*, *schiuwen* 'verscheuchen' (cf. Fick, III,<sup>4</sup> 467). Cf. No. 35.

103. OE. *raggig* 'shaggy,' NE. *rag*, *ragged*, ON. *rogg*, *rogg* 'long coarse wool,' *\*ragwō-*, -*wa-*: OE. *ragu* 'lichen,' OLG. *raginna* 'long hair, saetas,' MDu. *raegh* 'cobweb,' Skt. *raçanā* 'Strick, Riemen, Zügel, Gurt,' *raçmiḥ* 'Strang, Riemen, Zügel, Messchnur, Strahl.' Compare the root *\*reğ-* in ON. *rekende*, OE. *racente*, OHG. *rahhinza* 'chain, fetter,' ON. *rakke*, OE. *racca* 'cord forming part of rigging of ship.'

104. ME. *roggen* 'rock, move back and forth,' Icel. *rugga* 'rock, roll,' *rugg* 'a rocking, rolling,' *rugga* 'a rocking cradle,' Germ. *\*rugw-*: MLG. *rogen* 'regen, rühren, bewegen, erregen,' Icel. *rugl* 'confusion, disorder,' *rugla* 'confuse': ME. *rokken* 'rock,' No. 34.

105. NE. *prog* 'a poke, prod; a pointed instrument for poking or prodding,' verb 'poke, prod; poke about, prowl,' Germ. *\*prugg-*, *\*prugw-*, pre-Germ. *\*br̥ghu-*: Gr. *βραχὺς* 'small, short,' EFris. *prakken* 'pressen.' Cf. No. 38.

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## HEINE'S RETURN TO GOD

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Recantation has been the fate of many ultra-free thinkers. In his renunciation of paganism and his return to God, Heinrich Heine finds himself in illustrious company. Brentano, Tolstoy, Wilde, Strindberg—to mention only a few—experienced the struggle and the bitterness of a similar facing-about, when their philosophy of life was put under the strain of an unexpected test.

Involuntarily one is apt to refer to these cases as instances of conversion. The term is convenient, and no psychology of conversion could afford to neglect the lives of these men in studying the fundamental laws of the psychic life. Yet it must be remembered that, on the whole, theology has had an undisputed monopoly of this term and that psychology must hesitate to use it so long as it is not freed from some of its most clinging associations. Thus conversion is regarded by theology as essentially a new attitude of mind prompted by an act of divine grace—accordingly as something imposed from without rather than prepared by slow, invisible growth from within,<sup>1</sup> whereas science must necessarily discard any such mystical factor in its analyses. The frequent "suddenness" of conversion, therefore, becomes only an apparent suddenness. Furthermore, conversion customarily signifies the acceptance of a more or less definite religious orthodoxy, and its genuineness is attested by an overwhelming sense of sin.

As regards Heine, therefore, at any rate, discretion forbids the use of the term "conversion," inasmuch as his change of philosophy was neither sudden, nor in the direction of any religious orthodoxy, nor accompanied by any marked sense of sin.

To turn from the slippery ground of terms to the rock bottom of facts, however, the fundamental veering-about of Heine on the basic question of eternal values, during the last decade of his life, is an indisputable fact. It is a fact despite the slipshod haste of

<sup>1</sup> It is, of course, beyond the scope of this paper to touch upon the dilemma created for theology by the interaction between God's arbitrary grace and a "free will" on the part of man.

still occasionally recurring denials which pretend to see in Heine's recantation of paganism simply a last gigantic hoax and mystification of the public.<sup>1</sup> Such denials come from two classes of people: from those who have never examined the data first-hand; and from those who are incapable of approaching any complex psychological question with an open mind.

Avoiding controversy, I shall in the course of this paper (1) touch upon the chief data establishing Heine's mental transformation as a fact; (2) show in some detail the nature of Heine's new attitude; and (3) attempt the more difficult task of analyzing the motives which prompted Heine's renunciation of his past.

# I

The first signs of a religious crisis preparing itself in Heine occur in 1845—that memorable year which marked the beginning of Heine's bitter struggle with his family over the legacy he claimed from his deceased uncle Solomon, and marked also the beginning of the general paralysis which ended in his death.<sup>2</sup> A letter bearing the date of October 31, addressed to his friend and publisher, Campe, shows that Heine was already at that time aware of a change going on within him and that he struggled against it. With prophetic intuition he says: "Ein tieferer Ernst, ein unklarer Ungestüm hat mich ergriffen, der vielleicht eigentümlich furchtbare Ausbrüche gestattet in Prosa und Versen—aber das ist doch nicht was mir ziemt und was ich wollte." Three years later this change had progressed far enough for Heine to substitute "God" for "the gods" in his letters. The substance of this change from an aesthetic polytheism to a more sober deism is not altered by the frivolous tone with which Heine remarks apropos of the revolutionary turmoil of 1848: "Das ist Universalanarchie, Weltkuddelmuddel, sichtbar

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Scherr, for instance: "Heine hat den bekannten Bekehrungswitz im Romanzero losgelassen," *Allg. Gesch. d. Lit.* (1880), II, 380.

<sup>2</sup> An earlier religious crisis of brief duration occurred in 1836, when Heine experienced a sharp reaction against the life of sensuous enjoyment which he had begun to lead with the beautiful charmer who later became his wife. The struggle within his soul between his "Hellenic" doctrines of enjoyment and his longings for a crown of thorns is vividly depicted in a letter to the Princess Belgiojoso (October 30, 1836) and in his famous *Tannhäuser* poem. This time, however, in reality, as in the poem, Hellenism came off triumphant and his "Nazarene" longings were forgotten in a continued whirl of pleasure.

gewordener Gotteswahnsinn! Der Alte muss eingesperrt werden, wenn das so fortgeht. Das haben die Atheisten verschuldet, die ihn toll geärgert" (letter to Campe, July 9, 1848). Nor is it altered by the fact that Heine seems averse to blaming the gods for his sufferings, rather singling out God for the purpose: "Nie haben die Götter, oder vielmehr der liebe Gott (wie ich jetzt zu sagen pflege), einen Menschen ärger heimgesucht" (letter to Campe, April 30, 1849). Yet sporadic passages from private letters like these would not carry the force of conviction, were they not supplemented by public declarations on Heine's part beginning with 1849. In an open letter of that year he makes this frank confession:

Unterdessen, ich will es freimütig gestehen, ist eine grosse Umwandlung mit mir vorgegangen: ich bin kein göttlicher Bipede mehr; ich bin nicht mehr der "freieste Deutsche nach Goethe," wie mich Ruge in gesündern Tagen genannt hat; ich bin nicht mehr der grosse Heide Nr. II, den man mit dem weinlaubumkränzten Dionysus verglich, während man meinem Kollegen Nr. I den Titel eines grossherzoglichen weimar'schen Jupiter erteilte; ich bin kein lebensfreudiger, etwas wohlbeleibter Hellene mehr, der auf trübsinnige Nazarener herablächelte—ich bin jetzt nur ein armer totkranker Jude, ein abgezehrtes Bild des Jammers, ein unglücklicher Mensch [VII, 537–38].<sup>1</sup>

Two years later followed Heine's famous *Nachwort zum Roman-zero*, in which he bade a touching farewell to his beloved idols and unequivocally stated that he had made his peace with God. He had not entered the fold of any church nor embraced any particular set of dogmas, he declared, to guard against any misunderstanding; he had simply returned from the veiled atheism of the Hegelians to the faith in a personal God—a God with a will, and a God with the power to help (I, 485 ff.).

From this time forth not only Heine's personal letters but all his literary writings up to his death repeat and emphasize the change that had taken place within him. Thus his will, as drawn up in 1851, states that four years previously he had renounced all philosophic pride and returned to religious ideas and feelings and that he was prepared to die a believer in an only God, the eternal creator of the world whose mercy he implored for his immortal soul (VII, 520). Similarly his Preface in 1852 to the new edition of his *Religion*

<sup>1</sup> This and all subsequent quotations are based on Elster's edition.

and *Philosophy in Germany* is a confession that everything in that book pertaining to God was as false as it was thoughtlessly uttered (IV, 156), a repudiation which he reiterates and enlarges upon in his *Geständnisse*, written the year following (VI, 41 ff, 50, 53, 70, etc.). Finally, the prefatory remarks to his *Memoirs*—Heine's last essay in prose—leave no doubt that an earlier version of this work had to be destroyed by the author, partly owing to religious scruples (VII, 522, 458).

The seriousness of any one of the passages alluded to, individually considered, might indeed be questioned by a skeptical reader, wont to look in Heine's writings only for wit, even at his own expense. Taken as a whole, however, and in connection with the poetry of the same period which I have not even touched upon for want of space, they must convince any open-minded reader of the genuineness of Heine's return to God. This conviction will be sustained in examining Heine's attitude toward his newly found God and toward religion in general.

## II

Heine was well aware that his religious orientation after 1848 involved a sweeping repudiation of his past teachings and professions, and he faced this repudiation with the utmost frankness. Instead of trying to make capital out of the religious mantle with which he had been wont in the early thirties to drape his gospel of enjoyment, he discarded all ornamental trappings and admitted that what he had taught and practiced had amounted to atheism, similar to a defendant at the bar who hopes to lighten his sentence by a clean confession. Rather than resort to denial, he sought to base his plea for indulgence on extenuating circumstances. Heine reminded the reader of his *Confessions*—and God, by implication—that as a child he had been exposed to the doctrines of French eighteenth-century materialism (VI, 69), and that in later life he had been seduced by the authority attaching to the Hegelian school. He had never been an abstract thinker; he had simply repeated what the leaders of the school taught him as true; and he admitted that belief in Hegelianism had come to him so naturally because it flattered his vanity to regard himself as an autonomous God, the

source of all authority and moral law (VI, 48). Thus he regarded his former atheism in the light of a serious error rather than of a sin. He experienced nothing resembling a crushing sense of guilt calling for expiation and atonement.

In accord with this mental attitude is the marvelous equanimity with which Heine endured his terrible sufferings. While at times his agony became so acute that he could feel nothing but the divine hand smiting him in blind wrath, he preferred in moments of lesser tension to regard his tortures not as punishment but rather as a divine visitation serving for his further purification. After, as before, he loved to contemplate his past life with serenity and satisfaction; to mirror his soul and behold it beautiful and pure, marred only by scars but not disfigured by blemishes. "Die Hülle fällt ab von der Seele, und du kannst sie betrachten in ihrer schönen Nacktheit. Da sind keine Flecken, nur Wunden" (VII, 459).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, to the last, Heine was enamored of his own fair image. In his youth he had sensed this sweet odor of self-adoration by conjuring up in his dreams and his poems the vampire maid of ghostly beauty, the mermaid and the nymph, who stole to his couch to cover him, passively submitting, with passionate caresses. The denial of the love he craved from his cousin Amalie had thrown him into paroxysms of rage, threatening suicide. In later life he had vaunted as none other the sweet incense of flattery. He never wavered in his affection for his mother, who must have been the first to awaken these stirrings in his bosom. And now, when the end was in sight, when less deeply rooted traits of his nature gave way under the impetus of unforeseen attack, this self-love maintained itself in his relation to his newly found God.

The God with whose company Heine beguiled the long years of slow torture had to respond above all to Heine's desire to be loved.

<sup>1</sup> From numerous passages in a similar vein, I quote the following from his letters:

"Ja, ich bin sehr körperkrank, aber die Seele hat wenig gelitten; eine müde Blume, ist sie ein bisschen gebeugt, aber keineswegs welk, und sie wurzelt noch fest in der Wahrheit und Liebe" (to Varnhagen, January 3, 1846).

"Das holdselige Bewusstsein, ein schönes Leben geführt zu haben, erfüllt meine Seele selbst in dieser kummervollen Zeit; wird mich auch hoffentlich in der letzten Stunde bis an den weissen Abgrund begleiten" (to Campe, September 1, 1846).

"Mein Körper leidet grosse Qual, aber meine Seele ist ruhig wie ein Spiegel und hat manchmal auch noch ihre schönen Sonnenaufgänge und Sonnenuntergänge" (to Campe, December 14, 1852).



God had to be conceived as a loving and indulgent father. Heine could not but regard himself as a favorite child of God's—a child whose very failings, though they required punishment, could not help giving pleasure to the Almighty; a child whose word carried weight with his heavenly father, and whose intercession for his fellow-mortals would be given benevolent consideration by the Creator.<sup>1</sup>

Around this central nucleus Heine built up his conception of God. He endowed his God with the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, wisdom, justice, and mercy which the deists had left him, after stripping him of his more concrete human qualities; but he added a new attribute with which neither the stern English deists nor the flippant Voltaire had thought of clothing him: a sense of humor. God was enthroned by Heine as a heavenly Aristophanes who found intense enjoyment in the wit of his small human replica in Paris, who listened to the earthly poet's mellifluous verses with evident pleasure, and who treated even an occasional quip at his own expense with good-natured tolerance. But at the same time, in order not to let his favorite son forget his superior authority, he would play now and then one of his own cruelly practical jokes at the earthly joker's expense, so as to make him remember that he could be other things also besides a comedian (VI, 73).

Feuerbach's famous remark, according to which man has created God after his own image, holds particularly true of so subjective a poet as Heine. Its truth is borne out in the manner of the relations which Heine maintained with his God; in the tone of their social intercourse—speaking figuratively and yet not too figuratively. This tone, as to be expected, varies with the poet's mood of the moment. At times Heine is but the poor mortal, speaking humbly to the unfathomably superior Creator. But more often supplication, prayer, or reverence are replaced by a tone of intimate familiarity. God then divests himself of his divine robes of state, as it were. He allows Heine to feel himself on a pretended level with him. The

<sup>1</sup> Take, for example, the following: "Je te salue, cher lecteur, et je prie Dieu qu'il t'aie dans sa sainte et digne garde" (Préface to the *Poèmes et Légendes* [1855], I, 499). Incidentally, omitting the salutation, these words used to constitute the customary close of letters of royalty. It is commonly found, for instance, in the letters of Frederick the Great.

solemn audience gives way to familiar conversation on a level of equality. At such moments, Heine, in a bantering tone, lets the Lord know that he is quite willing to put up with the sinfulness of the world a little longer and enjoy the *status quo*, provided the Lord sees his way clear to granting him a little better health and a trifle more money (*Zum Lazarus*, 11; II, 97-98). Or he permits himself to point out to the Lord a certain inconsistency in creating a humorous poet such as he and then ruining his mood (*Miserere*, II, 89). Then, again, the injustice which he sees enthroned in the world drives him to the verge of positive blasphemy:

Warum schleppt sich blutend, elend,  
Unter Kreuzlast der Gerechte,  
Während glücklich als ein Sieger  
Trabt auf hohem Ross der Schlechte?

Woran liegt die Schuld? Ist etwa  
Unser Herr nicht ganz allmächtig?  
Oder treibt er selbst den Unfug?  
Ach, das wäre niederträchtig.

[*Zum Lazarus*, 1, II, 92.]

But such outbursts find their reaction in cries like:

Ertrage die Schickung und versuch  
Gelinde zu flennen, zu beten.

[*Zum Lazarus* 2, II, 92.]

Familiarity, banter, and criticism bordering on blasphemy were in the make-up of Heine's intercourse with his God. He felt no pangs on their account, even if at times his expression shot beyond the mark set by the respect due an almighty creator. Such freedom of expression constituted the inalienable right of the poet, and he would have resented any curtailment of it as much as any free citizen resents the limitation of frank criticism and daring caricature of the government. He would have resented it the more, as he felt that he was playing the game fair. Ever since the time of his return to God he had carefully refrained from publishing anything that in his opinion would tend to undermine the authority of God as such. In loyalty to his new religious viewpoint he had consigned his memoirs to the flames. He had suppressed countless atheistic witticisms, and he had sacrificed priceless gems of poetry.<sup>1</sup> Such

<sup>1</sup> VI, 51; I, 485; letters to Campe of June 1, 1849, and June 1, 1850, etc.

proofs of loyalty established a claim for divine indulgence, even if the poet's language became a trifle too bold or his anthropomorphization of the Creator a trifle too grotesque.

The poem *Himmelfahrt* (II, 217) is a case in point, illustrating the liberties Heine permitted himself when his poetic fancy attached itself to the figure of the Creator. He burlesques St. Peter, the heavenly gatekeeper (following in this case the precedent of the German folk legend); he burlesques the heavenly atmosphere; he burlesques the great Lord himself, for whose divine benefit the heavenly establishment is being run. The tolerant good humor of St. Peter, based on the reflection that it happens to be his birthday when Heine knocks at the gate; St. Peter's careful instructions to the newcomer to be circumspect about his conduct, to suppress feelings of fatigue or boredom at any cost, and to be even a trifle overdemonstrative in his relations to the Lord, inasmuch as even His Divine Self liked a touch of flattery now and then; and lastly St. Peter's *sub rosa* invitation to Heine for an occasional game of cards—these are phantasies that bespeak the sweetest naïve humor, without a touch of malice or blasphemy. Poems like *Himmelfahrt* merely show that God had entered not only Heine's mind as a concept but his imagination as well; that God had assumed the character of a concrete personality whose presence brought consolation and entertainment to the poet's sick bed. The danger of the reader's taking such fanciful character delineations of the Creator too literally is, happily, not very great, provided he remembers that Heine was at all times a poet and at the same time a great deal of a child, practicing a child's *naïveté* and enjoying its license. But it is well to recall Heine's own comment on his return to God, as set forth in a letter to Georg Weerth dated November 5, 1851:

Es freut mich, dass Ihnen meine Vorrede (zum Romanzero) gefallen hat; leider habe ich weder Zeit noch Stimmung gehabt, darin auszusprechen, was ich eben dartun wollte, nämlich, dass ich als Dichter sterbe, der weder Religion noch Philosophie braucht und mit beiden nichts zu schaffen hat. Der Dichter versteht sehr gut das symbolische Idiom der Religion und das abstrakte Verstandeskauderwelsch der Philosophie, aber weder die Herren der Religion noch die der Philosophie werden jemals den Dichter verstehen, dessen Sprache ihnen immer spanisch vorkommen wird, wie dem Massmann das Latein. Durch diese linguistische Unkenntnis geschah es, dass diese und jene Herren sich einbildeten, ich sei ein Betbruder geworden.

It must be added, on the other hand, that this letter understates the positive character of the change that was proceeding in Heine; for it does not allude to his recasting of ethical values. It does not mention the fact that the philosophy of enjoyment, to the proclamation of which Heine had seemed foreordained, was slowly but surely being replaced by a more austere morality.

Though less striking than his return to belief in God, Heine's new ethical orientation is an even more significant factor in the readjustment of his personality, face to face with approaching dissolution.

In the *Nachwort zum Romanzero* (1851), Heine had bidden a touching farewell to his beloved pagan gods. In *Die Götter im Exil* (1853), he bestowed a last fondly lingering look upon their beloved company, most of all on Dionysus-Bacchus, whom he calls "der Heiland der Sinnenlust" (VI, 83). In parting from them he had also turned his back upon the life of enjoyment of which the gods were to him concrete symbolical impersonations. He had been forced to take farewell of it personally, because his body had wasted to a mere shadow; but, now that he saw it only from afar, its glamor also waned, and he saw the antithesis between the life of sense and the life of the spirit, which he had been wont to state in the extreme form of antinomy, in a new light. The two polar opposites of sensualism and spiritualism, or Hellenism and Nazarenism, as he renamed them after 1836, remained, for the most part, as far apart as ever, but his thought no longer spontaneously gravitated to the Hellenic pole. The spiritual dignity of morality loomed in a new light, and Heine's *Geständnisse* reach their climax in the statement, "Gutsein ist besser denn Schönheit" (VI, 60).

Even attempts to reconcile opposites which had heretofore seemed irreconcilable are not lacking. Thus the beautiful fragment *Bimini* speaks of two divine messages brought from Byzantium (the Renaissance), and from Egypt (the Bible):

Buch der Schönheit heisst das eine,  
Buch der Wahrheit heisst das andre.

Beide aber hat Gott selber  
Abgefasst in zwei verschiednen  
Himmelsprachen, und er schrieb sie,  
Wie wir glauben, eigenhändig [II, 126].

But it was too late for Heine to effect any real synthesis. In his swan song, the poem entitled *Für die Mouche*, the antithesis is again as glaring as ever:

Die Gegensätze sind hier grell gepaart,  
Des Griechen Lustsinn und der Gottgedanke  
Judäas! [II, 47].

And from the depths of his soul comes the despairing outcry:

O, dieser Streit wird enden nimmermehr,  
Stets wird die Wahrheit hadern mit dem Schönen,  
Stets wird geschieden sein der Menschheit Heer  
In zwei Partein: Barbaren und Hellenen [II, 49].

The import of Heine's change of front toward morality becomes clear in the light of the peculiar setting in which it makes its appearance. Heine's new valuation of morality emerges simultaneously with the reawakening of his love for his race. "Meine Vorliebe für Hellas hat . . . abgenommen," his thought runs in his *Confessions*. "Ich sehe jetzt, die Griechen waren nur schöne Jünglinge, die Juden waren aber immer Männer, nicht bloss ehemals, sondern bis auf den heutigen Tag, trotz achtzehn Jahrhunderten der Verfolgung und des Elends" (VI, 55).

In his youth Heine had shown an active interest in the history of Judaism. For a time he had been active as a member of the Berlin group which was working toward the end of raising the cultural level of their race which had so long been kept outside the pale of European civilization. From the interest in the fate of the Jews during the Middle Ages had sprung his novel *Der Rabbi von Bacharach*, which he left unfinished when his interest in Judaism began to wane under the pressure of other tasks and when the formulation of distinctly cosmopolitan and humanitarian ideals alienated him from the problem of Judaism as such. In the course of time his "Hellenic" philosophy of enjoyment had forced him into a state of active hostility against Judaism as a *Weltanschauung*. But now, with the collapse of his Hellenism and the enforced leisure of the sick bed his old interest in the people of his race resurged and grew in intensity to passionate love.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Signs of Heine's returning love for Judaism are not lacking even earlier. In the wild-huntsman's vision of *Atta Troll* (1842), the Jewess Herodias carries the prize before the romantic "Fee Abunde" and the Greek Diana (II, 401).

Thus, beginning with the *Romanzero*, Judaism becomes the central theme of his poetry. Biblical episodes are treated with a mastery of language and a vividness of outline which bespeak the intensity with which Heine recreated the past of his race (*Das goldne Kalb*; *König David*; *Salomo*). The culture of medieval Spanish Judaism is immortalized in *Jehuda ben Halevy*; and its gloomy counterpart, ferocious orthodoxy, is depicted with a mixture of railing humor and mordant irony in the famous *Disputation*. The beauty and the tragedy of modern Judaism, again, find their finest expression in *Der Apollgott* and *Prinzessin Sabbath*.

Towering in Heine's mind, however, above all the Jewish characters that fired his imagination was the great prophet Moses. The more Heine read the Bible during his years of solitude, the more was he overwhelmed by the grandeur of the Moses of the Pentateuch. "Welche Riesengestalt!" he exclaims in his *Confessions*. "Wie klein erscheint der Sinai, wenn der Moses darauf steht! Dieser Berg ist nur das Postament, worauf die Füße des Mannes stehen, dessen Haupt in den Himmel hineinragt, wo er mit Gott spricht" (VI, 54 ff.). He sees in Moses the genius who gave the world a God; the wise organizer who welded tribes of nomads into a nation. The vastness of the task which Moses conceived and carried out appealed to Heine as a monumental work of art; he extolled Moses as a supreme artist, a builder of human pyramids and human obelisks (VI, 55). At the same time Moses appeared to him a far-seeing guardian of liberty, whose agrarian laws should serve as models to future generations. He calls him a practical socialist and a great emancipator (VI, 61). Thus Heine's penchant for hero-worship leads him to include Moses in the ranks of his supermen. Goethe, Napoleon, and at one time Hegel are the only others whose greatness he feels to be incommensurable to human standards. But Moses towers supreme, when Heine surveys his gallery of heroes:

Einer nur, ein einz'ger Held  
 Gab uns mehr und gab uns Bessres  
 Als Kolumbus, das ist jener,  
 Der uns einen Gott gegeben.

Sein Herr Vater, der hiess Amram,  
 Seine Mutter hiess Jochebeth,

Und er selber, Moses heisst er,  
Und er ist mein bester Heros.

[*Vitzliputzli*, I, 374 ff.]

So Heine's return to God is intimately bound up with his return to racial consciousness. The Jews have become for him the people with a predestined mission. They are the nation that gave the world a God and a moral law (VI, 56), and guarded their treasure by preserving the Bible through centuries of persecution (VI, 58). And despite the caricatures of the idea of Judaism which Heine finds in Scotland, Denmark, North Germany, and the United States, despite the somber gray of a puritanism that guards the letter more than the spirit, he is convinced that the morality of ancient Judaism will remain in the face of change as the genuine, the imperishable and the true (VI, 60).

Love of one's neighbor and purity of spirit constitute in part the morality of Judaism, as Heine conceived it (VI, 59). In view of the fact, however, that Heine's former Hellenism had made sensuous enjoyment the crucial point of issue, the essence of the morality of Judaism is clearly set forth in the following paragraph:

Judäa erschien mir immer wie ein Stück Occident, das sich mitten in den Orient verloren. In der Tat, mit seinem spiritualistischen Glauben, seinen strengen, keuschen, sogar asketischen Sitten, kurz mit seiner abstrakten Innerlichkeit, bildete dieses Land und sein Volk immer den sonderbarsten Gegensatz zu den Nachbarländern und Nachbarvölkern, die den üppig buntesten und brünstigsten Naturkulten huldigend, im bacchantischen Sinnenjubil ihr Dasein verluderten. Israel sass fromm unter seinem Feigenbaum und sang das Lob des unsichtbaren Gottes und übte Tugend und Gerechtigkeit, während in den Tempeln von Babel, Ninive, Sidon und Tyrus jene blutigen und unzünftigen Orgien gefeiert wurden, ob deren Beschreibung uns noch jetzt das Haar sich sträubt [VI, 61].

After the foregoing it is clear that there could be no question of a rapprochement on Heine's part to any branch of the Christian church. Heine protested against any such interpretation on numerous occasions, at times in a grave, dignified way with a marked show of courtesy toward both Catholicism and Lutheranism, and at times with the impish smile that made him the *enfant terrible* of the orthodox (VI, 56 f., 65 f.; VII, 519, etc.). However, quite apart from dogma of any sort, Heine's new conception of morality



is not tinged with any specifically Christian elements. Heine made no half-hearted attempts to love his enemies, as Christianity prescribes. He hated them with a clean conscience, based on ample Old Testament precedent. His remark in the *Nachwort zum Romanzero* to the effect that, since he was in need of God's mercy himself, he had granted amnesty to all his enemies, constituted at best a pious wish. It did not prevent him, at any rate, from including in the *Romanzero* itself a poem entitled *Vermächtnis*, in which he bequeathed all his physical ailments to his enemies (I, 429). In one of his posthumous poems he likewise makes over a varied assortment of undesirable legacies to individuals and groups that had incurred his wrath (*Testament*, II, 220), while a whole group of such poems heaps maledictions on the heads of Karl Heine and his kin (II, 104-9). Besides, one of his posthumous aphorisms leaves nothing to be desired in the way of frankness:

Ich habe die friedlichste Gesinnung. Meine Wünsche sind: eine bescheidene Hütte, ein Strohdach, aber ein gutes Bett, gutes Essen, Milch und Butter, sehr frisch, vor dem Fenster Blumen, vor der Tür einige schöne Bäume, und wenn der liebe Gott mich ganz glücklich machen will, lässt er mich die Freude erleben, dass an diesen Bäumen etwa sechs bis sieben meiner Feinde aufgehängt werden. Mit gerührtem Herzen werde ich ihnen vor ihrem Tode alle Unbill verzeihen, die sie mir im Leben zugefügt—ja, man muss seinen Feinden verzeihen, aber nicht früher, als bis sie gehängt worden [VII, 400].

This frank, virile hatred is, however, not incompatible with a large capacity for sympathy, such as we look for in vain during Heine's days of prosperity. In this respect his own suffering has taught him a lesson. Poems like *Pomare*, *Sklavenschiff*, *Jammertal*, show a stirring of deep sympathy for the sick, the oppressed, and the poor. To point out how Heine's sympathies during the years of his decline incline more and more to the loser in the struggle for survival would lead us too far afield. Suffice it to remember Legras' happy characterization of the *Romanzero* as "le livre d'or des vaincus."

A sketch of Heine's return to God and the morality of his forefathers would not be complete without mention of Heine's attitude toward the problem of survival after death. As a rule men "get

religion" at the approach of death. Fear of eternal punishment is undoubtedly the motive underlying most conversions.

Speculations on immortality and resurrection, on heaven and hell form a persistent topic of Heine's sick-bed musings. Occasionally he professed a certain uneasiness in regard to the eternal flames. Commenting on the haste with which he destroyed such poetic productions as he felt would compromise him in the eyes of God, he remarks: "Es ist besser, dass die Verse brennen, als der Versifex" (I, 485; cf. VI, 51). In the same connection he admits that the prospect of immortality has something very appealing to a poor wretched mortal. With undisguised pleasure he notes that the concept of God involves that of immortality as its generally accepted corollary. Having developed the attributes of God after the manner of the deïsts, he adds:

Die Unsterblichkeit der Seele, unsre Fortdauer nach dem Tode wird uns alsdann gleichsam mit in den Kauf gegeben, wie der schöne Markknochen, den der Fleischer, wenn er mit seinen Kunden zufrieden ist, ihnen unentgeltlich in den Korb schiebt. Ein solcher schöner Markknochen wird in der französischen Küchensprache "la réjouissance" genannt, und man kocht damit ganz vorzügliche Kraftbrühen, die für einen armen schmachtenden Kranken sehr stärkend und labend sind. Dass ich eine solche réjouissance nicht ablehnte und sie mir vielmehr mit Behagen zu Gemüte führte, wird jeder fühlende Mensch billigen [I, 486].

In the same vein his poem *Fromme Warnung* paints the delights of heaven as consisting of quiet, soft slippers and beautiful music (I, 420). Some of the other poems of the *Romanzero*, however, take a less optimistic view of future prospects. In *Rückschau* the thought of again meeting his "Christian brothers" in the beyond fills him with disgust (I, 416). In *Auferstehung* he rebels against the summary justice of the Supreme Court of the Day of Judgment that would separate men into sheep and goats according to an altogether too convenient formula (I, 417). In *Der Abgekühlte*, again, the prospect of resurrection appears as a rather remote compensation for the lack of joy and comfort here below (I, 420). This mood seems to have gained the upper hand as the years wore on and the calls of death became more frequent and insistent. Then the thought of the separation of body and soul loomed as something

altogether terrible, as in the dialogue between body and soul, where the soul says:

Weh mir! jetzt soll ich gleichsam nackt,  
 Ganz ohne Körper, ganz abstrakt,  
 Hinlungern in ein sel'ges Nichts  
 Dort oben in dem Reich des Lichts,  
 In jenen kalten Himmelshallen,  
 Wo schweigend die Ewigkeiten wallen  
 Und mich angähnen—sie klappern dabei  
 Langweilig mit ihren Pantoffeln von Blei.  
 O, das ist grauenhaft, o bleib,  
 Bleib bei mir, du geliebter Leib! [II, 91].

To dispel such thoughts Heine had recourse to phantasies like the dialogue with St. Peter at the gate of heaven.

Heine's last word on immortality seems to be contained in one of the poems addressed to his *Mouche*. *Die Wahlverlobten* ends with renunciation of any hope of the continuance of individual existence and tries to derive comfort from the immortality of the poet's works:

. . . . Wir scheiden heut  
 Auf immerdar. Kein Wiedersehn  
 Gibt es für uns in Himmelshöhn.  
 Die Schönheit ist dem Staub verfallen,  
 Du wirst zerstieben, wirst verhallen.  
 Viel anders ist es mit Poeten;  
 Die kann der Tod nicht gänzlich töten.  
 Uns trifft nicht weltliche Vernichtung,  
 Wir leben fort im Land der Dichtung,  
 In Avalun, dem Feenreiche—  
 Leb wohl auf ewig, schöne Leiche! [II, 45].<sup>1</sup>

To be sure, Heine's last letter to his mother (December 30, 1855) expresses the confident hope of reunion, but it is only necessary to recall the fictions to which Heine persistently resorted to conceal from his mother the gravity of his illness, in order to realize that such testimony cannot carry any great weight.

Generally speaking, one cannot venture to say anything very definite about Heine's mental world during the months which marked the last act of the drama of his sufferings. He was too exhausted

<sup>1</sup> But to realize how bitterly Heine felt the inadequacy of such an immortality, one has only to read poems like *Der Scheidende* (II, 109) and *Epilog* (II, 110).

with pain and too benumbed through the huge doses of morphine which his condition required to care much about the future one way or the other. His apathy was general except for the hope that the end would come. He was already a corpse save for a feeble spark of life which put its patience to a last test by its long protracted glow.

Erstorben ist in meiner Brust  
 Jedwede weltlich eitle Lust,  
 Schier ist auch mir erstorben drin  
 Der Hass des Schlechten, sogar der Sinn  
 Für eigne wie für fremde Not—  
 Und in mir lebt nur noch der Tod! [II, 109].

As a picture of Heine's inner world since 1848 this sketch is altogether fragmentary, confining itself, as it does, to studying the positive religious transformation that took place in him. A rounded-out picture of Heine's last years would perforce stress in addition both his somber pessimism and his frequent passionate longing for the wild joys of the senses that had ceased to function. Neither his pessimism nor his longings can be logically reconciled with his religious rebirth. They are croppings out of his old self which would not die while there was still breath in his body. Heine remained to the last a complex personality, torn between mutually incompatible desires; a play of cross-currents which he knew not how to unite as tributaries in a life of playful, harmonious purpose.

### III

What were the motives which prompted Heine's renunciation of his paganism and his return to God?

In more than one way Heine occupies a unique position among German poets. To a degree not found in any other poet, Heine's productions gravitate about his own personality. Almost every line that he wrote invites psychological analysis, and almost every line furnishes data for such analysis. Despite the complexity of Heine's personality, it becomes a grateful and fascinating task to seek in Heine, behind the bundle of logical contradictions with which his life abounds, the psychological unity in which they had their source. Without any apprehension, therefore, of having to resort to vague

generalities or of getting lost in blind alleys, one may attempt to retrace the psychological paths which led Heine back to God and the morality of his forefathers.

Wish is said to be the father of thought; so it is well to examine, first of all, the considerations which made a world ruled over by an old-fashioned God an acceptable place of abode for Heine, after he had pronounced his *de facto* recognition of God. In moods of grave seriousness mingled with melancholy mirth Heine dwelt with pleasure on the advantages which he derived from the existence of an omnipotent creator, enthroned in heaven. Racked by tortures which could end only with death, shut out from the gay life of the humming metropolis, condemned to a loneliness even more terrible than his sufferings, he derived consolation from the idea that there was a God to whose ear he had access at every moment; that there was someone whom he could talk and pray to; someone whom he could flatter, cajole, entertain, or abuse according to his mood of the moment; someone of whose attention and appreciation he could always feel certain. To quote his own words:

In diesem Zustande ist es eine wahre Wohltat für mich, dass es jemand im Himmel gibt, dem ich beständig die Litanei meiner Leiden vorwimmern kann, besonders nach Mitternacht, wenn Mathilde sich zur Ruhe begeben, die sie oft sehr nötig hat [VI, 50].

Then he could confide to the Lord his own troubles and his worries as to what should become of his wife, when he could no longer guard her steps nor provide for her wants. To such tender solicitude for Mathilde's material and moral welfare in that wolves' den, Paris (*Babylonische Sorgen*, II, 43)—a solicitude which largely served as a cover for tormenting jealousy—such poems as the touching *Ich war, O Lamm, als Hirt bestellt* owe their being (II, 42). It was also a relief to him, as he jestingly remarks, to be able to intrust his affairs to a heavenly attorney who, thanks to his omniscience, would doubtless be able to manage them much better than he had ever been able to do (VI, 50).

From quite another angle, besides, Heine's return to God had much in its favor. Formerly the profession of atheistic doctrines had been a characteristic of the "intelligentsia." A coterie of aristocrats of the intellect had promulgated them in an abstruse

philosophical language, debarring the comprehension of the populace. But in the course of time the situation had shifted. Thanks to Karl Marx, atheism had now—especially since 1848—become the creed of the workman. It was no longer exclusive, nor a sign of distinction. With this turn of affairs, atheism lost its attraction for Heine. Expressing his realization of this change with startling candor, he remarks:

Als der Atheismus anfang, sehr stark nach Käse, Branntwein und Tabak zu stinken: da gingen mir plötzlich die Augen auf, und was ich nicht durch meinen Verstand begriffen hatte, das begriff ich jetzt durch den Geruchssinn, durch das Missbehagen des Ekels, und mit meinem Atheismus hatte es, gottlob! ein Ende [VI, 42].

To the aid of this aesthetic aversion to mingling with the common herd—intellectually no less than physically—there came also a feeling of anxiety as to the future, when Heine observed the program of communism marching under the banner of atheism. When communism was in its infancy, Heine had helped to proclaim its future mission in pealing verse.<sup>1</sup> Now, however, when the realization of its program no longer seemed altogether utopian, he began to look with fear upon the fledgling which he had helped to hatch. Hastening to protest that his misgivings had nothing in common with those of the capitalist who fears for his dividends, he adds:

Mich beklemmt vielmehr die geheime Angst des Künstlers und des Gelehrten, die wir unsre ganze moderne Zivilisation, die mühselige Errungenschaft so vieler Jahrhunderte, die Frucht der edelsten Arbeiten unsrer Vorgänger, durch den Sieg des Kommunismus bedroht sehen [VI, 42].

And with a flash of insight which illuminates the fundamental nature of his agitation for political democracy, he continues:

Wir wollen gern für das Volk uns opfern, denn Selbstaufopferung gehört zu unsern raffiniertesten Genüssen—die Emanzipation des Volkes war die grosse Aufgabe unseres Lebens, und wir haben dafür gerungen und namenloses Elend ertragen in der Heimat wie im Exile—aber die reinliche, sensitive Natur des Dichters sträubt sich gegen jede persönlich nahe Berührung mit dem Volke, und noch mehr schrecken wir zusammen bei dem Gedanken an seine Liebkosungen, vor denen uns Gott bewahre [VI, 42].

Heine had taken pride in the rôle of a political spokesman, formulating the aspirations of the people. Condescending to lead, he

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*, II, 431-33.

had enjoyed this form of "self-sacrifice," as he calls it. But now that the people knew what they wanted, the day of such leaders was over. When the one-time leaders were summoned to fall in line and march with the rest, Heine withdrew. He had not meant equality to be taken so literally. He suddenly saw that the aspirations of the new generation, their discipline, their unerring *Zielbewusstsein* left no room for his own romantic subjectivism. He would not follow them; they paid no heed to him. And suddenly he became aware that the tables were turned, that atheism was now the vogue of the day, and that it was again a sign of distinction to render homage to the God who had been deposed by the noisy crowd. His newly found faith restored to Heine that sense of superiority, that isolation of genius which he craved from the depths of his nature. Now he did not feel as one left behind in the march of progress. He felt as one on a peak whose eye reaches far beyond the goal of the noisy marchers below.

The consolation, the security and the entertainment that Heine felt in communing with his God; the feeling of aristocratic isolation which his renunciation of atheism involved—one will do well to regard these rather as benefits resulting from Heine's return to God than as motives prompting that return. Such they were certainly in Heine's own estimation; for he leaves no doubt as to what he regarded as the chief factor prompting his spiritual transformation. Repudiating anything that savored of conversion by miracle, he attributes his change of viewpoint solely to the Bible:

In der Tat, weder eine Vision, noch eine seraphitische Verzückung, noch eine Stimme vom Himmel, auch kein merkwürdiger Traum oder sonst ein Wunderspuk brachte mich auf den Weg des Heils, und ich verdanke meine Erleuchtung ganz einfach der Lektüre eines Buches. Eines Buches? Ja, und es ist ein altes, schlichtes Buch, bescheiden wie die Natur, auch natürlich wie diese; ein Buch, das werkeltägig und anspruchslos aussieht wie die Sonne, die uns wärmt, wie das Brot, das uns nährt; ein Buch, das so traulich, so segnend gütig uns anblickt wie eine alte Grossmutter, die auch täglich in dem Buche liest, mit den lieben, bebenden Lippen und mit der Brille auf der Nase—und dieses Buch heisst auch ganz kurzweg das Buch, die Bibel [Preface to the second edition of *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (1852), IV, 159; cf. VI, 54].

This fine tribute is altogether in keeping with Heine's reawakened love for the culture of his forefathers, the more so as his praise goes



out whole-heartedly only to the Old Testament in contrast to the New, which at times offended his aesthetic sense by its wholesale chastisements (VI, 54). As the loftiest monument of the lore of his ancient race, the Bible kindled his imagination.

But this was not the first time that the Bible had entered into Heine's life as a real experience. Under very different circumstances, twenty years earlier, on the island of Heligoland, he had read the Bible with open eyes and been impressed by its grandeur. At that time also the naïve simplicity of its style had elicited from him a tribute of unreserved praise, without, however, disturbing his frank paganism (VII, 46, 52). Then he had read it as a literary masterpiece; now he read it as a religious message.

So the question remains, Why did Heine now approach the Bible in a religious frame of mind? It was not a case of Heine's suddenly and unexpectedly finding his God in the Bible. Like the prodigal son, as it were, he had turned his back on the pagan world and started on his search for God. In this search he did not stumble on the Bible. He went straight toward it, knowing that he would find his God there.

Obviously, to rest content with the statement that the Bible brought Heine back to God would be to evade the problem, since his study of the Bible marked rather the end than the beginning of his religious transformation. With the problem thus defined but not solved, the real task is to trace Heine's religious attitude to its source; to seek the conditions that encouraged its growth in the basic impulses which constituted the driving forces of Heine's personality. Instead of asking what outside forces or circumstances prompted Heine's return to God, one must rather ask what elements of his make-up made Heine susceptible to religious ideas and sentiments, provided there was a combination of circumstances favoring such a turn.

It is necessary to scrutinize Heine's life with a view to probing how deeply any convictions on philosophical, religious, political, and social questions permeated Heine's being; how far the tentacles of any of Heine's theoretical beliefs reached into his personality and how firmly they were imbedded in it. For if it should become apparent that philosophical, religious, political, or social issues, as

such, did not touch the basic stratum of Heine's personality at all, the solution of the question at issue would, in the nature of the case, be a great deal nearer.

Frankly—though it involves anticipation—a dispassionate study of Heine the man forces one to the unqualified conclusion that theoretical issues of any kind whatever did not touch the core of his personality. To put it briefly and in the form of an ethical thesis: Heine lacked intellectual integrity of the highest order.

Barring the ethical significance of this observation, Heine himself, with his customary keenness of vision, felt a certain air of unreality pervading all the issues on which he took sides as a spirited fighter. He enjoyed the clash of intellects; he exulted in the sparks that were drawn in the encounter of mind with mind; he loved the spectacle of conflict—so much so that the sight of it would lull him into a state of dreamy abstraction and make him forget for the moment what it was all about. Waking up from his reverie he would realize that he was a dreamer rather than a fighter by temperament; that while others were fighting beside him in the white heat of passion, he fought in the mood of aesthetic play. His awareness of this mood is admirably shown in a passage dating, it must be remembered, from the days when Heine was still a good fighter:

Von Natur neige ich mich zu einem gewissen *dolce far niente* und ich lagere mich gern auf blumige Rasen und betrachte dann die ruhigen Züge der Wolken und ergötze mich an ihrer Beleuchtung; doch der Zufall wollte, dass ich aus dieser gemächlichen Träumerei sehr oft durch harte Rippenstösse des Schicksals geweckt wurde, und ich musste gezwungenerweise teilnehmen an den Schmerzen und Kämpfen der Zeit, und ehrlich war dann meine Teilnahme, und ich schlug mich trotz den Tapfersten. . . . Aber ich weiss nicht, wie ich mich ausdrücken soll, meine Empfindungen behielten doch immer eine gewisse Abgeschlossenheit von den Empfindungen der anderen; ich wusste wie ihnen zu Mute war, aber mir war ganz anders zu Mute wie ihnen; und wenn ich mein Schlachtross auch noch so rüstig tummelte und mit dem Schwert auch noch so gnadenlos auf die Feinde einhieb, so erfasste mich doch nie das Fieber oder die Lust oder die Angst der Schlacht; ob meiner inneren Ruhe ward mir oft unheimlich zu Sinne, ich merkte, dass die Gedanken anderörtig verweilen, während ich im dichtesten Gedränge des Parteikriegs mich herumschlug, und ich kam mir manchmal vor wie Ogier der Däne, welcher traumwandelnd gegen die Sarazenen foht [*Über die französische Bühne* (1837), IV, 542].

The same mood prevails in his poem *Ali Bei* (1839), in which he masquerades as a Saracen fighting the crusaders:

Und der Held besteigt sein Schlachtross,  
Fliegt zum Kampf, doch wie im Traume;  
Denn ihm ist zu Sinn als läg' er  
Immer noch in Mädchenarmen.

Während er die Frankenköpfe  
Dutzendweis heruntersäbelt,  
Lächelt er wie ein Verliebter,  
Ja, er lächelt sanft und zärtlich [I, 278].

It is also expressed in the opening paragraph of his *Helgoland-briefe* (1830?) (VII, 42), and it comes again to the fore in a letter to St. René Taillandier of November 21, 1851:

Selbst ehemals, als ich gesund war, hatte die Begeisterung der Deutschen für mich etwas Erschreckendes, das schlecht zu einer gewissen träumerischen Grandezza passte, die in meiner Natur liegt.<sup>1</sup>

It might be objected that this mood of the unreality of conflict was limited to issues of a political nature; but such doubts cannot stand in the face of the testimony of Heine's *Geständnisse*. There he comments on the end of his warfare against the Roman Catholic church as follows:

Ich habe längst aller Befehdung derselben entsagt, und längst ruht in der Scheide das Schwert, das ich einst zog im Dienste einer Idee und nicht einer Privatleidenschaft. Ja, ich war in diesem Kampf gleichsam ein *officier de fortune*, der sich brav schlägt aber nach der Schlacht oder nach dem Scharmützel keinen Tropfen Groll im Herzen bewahrt, weder gegen die bekämpfte Sache noch gegen ihre Vertreter [VI, 66].

Almost in the same breath, with the issues of Liberalism and Jesuitism in mind, he makes a confession which does greater credit to his faculty of self-analysis than to his intellectual integrity:

Und dann, ohne im geringsten die Hut meiner Parteiinteressen zu verabsäumen, musste ich mir in der Besonnenheit meines Gemütes zuweilen gestehen, wie es oft von den kleinsten Zufälligkeiten abhing, dass wir dieser statt jener Partei zufließen und uns jetzt nicht in einem ganz entgegengesetzten Feldlager befänden [VI, 68].

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also the conclusion to chap. xxix of the *Reise von München nach Genua*, III, 276.

Expatriating on the fortuitous character of his development, Heine then indulges in fond speculations as to what his career might have been if his mother, who displayed a great deal of both initiative and opportunism in determining upon the lines of his early training (VII, 463-65), had followed one of the many alternatives under consideration and consecrated him to the service of the Catholic church. Picturing himself in the rôle of a Roman "abbate," a Papal *nuntio*, a cardinal, or even that of the pope himself, he notes with satisfaction that such a career would have afforded him ample opportunity to display his talents as a patron of art and beauty. Moreover, he would have performed his clerical duties with an inborn sense of the solemn gravity and aesthetic dignity consonant with such a position. With a mien of imperturbable, sacerdotal seriousness, heightened by the splendor of his gorgeous vestments and the impressiveness of his ecclesiastical retinue, he would have bestowed the annual blessing upon the whole Christendom, "denn ich kann sehr ernst sein, wenn es durchaus nötig ist" (VI, 69-71). How this trend of thought captivated Heine's fancy is shown by the fact that in his *Memoirs* he indulged in dreams of a similar vein, as is still apparent despite the fact that their substance, among other matters, fell a victim to his cousin's ruthless censorship (cf. VII, 460, 466).

If the foregoing data have established the view that social, political, philosophical, and religious issues failed to touch the core of Heine's personality, his late recantation on matters of religion and morals must appear to presuppose less of a psychic revolution than would otherwise have been the case. Then it is clear that Heine's fundamental self was not affected by his return to God.

From this point of approach one is also able to understand how from first to last Heine could maintain in the most emphatic terms that his whole mental life presented a picture of consistent mental unity, in spite of its glaring contradictions, and how he could insist that inner unity was an indispensable condition to spiritual greatness. One recalls Heine's early claim to unity, couched in Hegelian terms, as formulated in his correspondence with his friend Moser.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For example on November 27, 1823, Heine says that he expects to show "wie mein ganzes, trübes, drangvolles Leben in das Uneigennützigste, in die Idee, übergeht."

One meets it again in the Preface to the second edition of the *Buch der Lieder* (1837).<sup>1</sup> In his *Börne* he repeats this claim by implication in the statement "dass ohne innere Einheit keine geistige Grösse möglich ist" (VII, 135). And finally, after the *Geständnisse* had been given to the world, Heine reiterates it in such a way as to show plainly that his sense of inner unity had remained intact despite the collapse of his paganism. Writing to Campe, he comments on his latest productions as follows:

Diese Poesien sind etwas ganz Neues und geben keine alten Stimmungen in alter Manier; aber zu ihrer Würdigung sind nur die ganz naiven Naturen und die ganz grossen Kritiker berufen. Die Geständnisse sind ebenfalls nicht jedem zugänglich, doch sind sie wichtig, indem die Einheit aller meiner Werke und meines Lebens besser begriffen wird [August 3, 1854].

What a tenacious sense of unity for a poet whose life presents the classical example of *Zerrissenheit*! This sense of unity despite contradiction is so startling a trait of Heine's nature that an understanding of its basis may well furnish the key to Heine's whole personality. It may even bear out Heine's contention that his return to God was but a phase of a consistent process of evolution.

The more one scrutinizes Heine's life, the more impossible does it become to base his sense of unity on any logical unity of life-long plan and purpose. Moreover, had there been any such rational unity, Heine would have undoubtedly given it a clear-cut formulation. All the facts tend to show that Heine rather had in mind a strong sense of continuity which he confused with consistency, and that he spoke of unity where consistency would have been the only appropriate term (as is at least the case in the above-quoted letter to Campe) solely because, in spite of himself, he still talked the language of Hegelianism which interpreted the world as a *logical* phenomenon.

I hold, however, the view that Heine's life presents, in fact, a marked psychological continuity, apart from the formal unity which the life of every individual involves in so far as it is the totality of experience bound up with a single body. I would formulate the continuity pervading Heine's life as follows:

<sup>1</sup> "Bemerken muss ich jedoch, dass meine poetischen, eben so gut wie meine politischen, theologischen und philosophischen Schriften einem und demselben Gedanken entsprossen sind . . . (I, 497).

Heine was from first to last a modern Narcissus, enamored of his own image.<sup>1</sup> The world of nature and the world of men was to him a vast many-sided mirror in which he always beheld himself with infinite pleasure. He felt a tenderness, a fondness, a compassion, an admiration toward his own soul amounting to worship. He loved his body with equal fervor. His hands, his eyes, his lips, his forehead were objects on which he lavished his affection. He was enamored of the sweet odor of his body. Besides loving himself, he craved the personal flattery of others. To his inmost self his art and the fame it brought him were essentially personal ornaments—accomplishments that graced his personality. The political arena was to him but a stage where he could strike a heroic pose and drape his garment about him in the most becoming folds. And all this with the naïve self-assurance, the graceful poise of the born aesthete who knows he cannot help but please!

This extraordinary self-love is exposed to full view in his two earliest letters to his friend Sethe (July 6 and October 27, 1816). It is the ever-recurrent theme of his early love poetry. It explains the fearful nature of the crisis that broke when the object which he had singled out for his love dared not to return it. It is the center of the complex from which the sadistic and masochistic visions of the *Almansor* and *Ratcliff* detached themselves. It is the one firm thread that holds together the ramblings of his *Reisebilder* and gives their characteristic flavor—and most piquant charm—to all his subsequent writings. And this love of his person—his body as well as his soul—never parted company with Heine during the long years of his martyrdom.

To lay bare Heine's Narcissus-love in full would require a substantial monograph in itself, but as Heine's ostentatious coquetry with his person has so often been pointed out by both benevolent and hostile critics, this general statement may suffice here. It seems to me, however, that in the interpretation of Heine's personality this peculiar form of "autoerotism" has never received

<sup>1</sup> Narcissism is clearly recognized by students of sex pathology such as Kraft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, Freud, etc., as one of the types of sexual inversion—psychic as well as physical. The term "Narcissism" is borrowed from the familiar Greek myth of the youth Narcissus who fell in love with his own image, mirrored in the water.

sufficiently serious consideration; for it appears to me such a fundamental trait of his nature that its manifestation was as natural to Heine and as automatic almost as the act of breathing. This love of his person was so intimately real to Heine, that beside it all "issues" paled into unreality.

Examples could be multiplied to show how Heine's Narcissus-love maintained itself undimmed to the end, but I think the analysis of a single one will suffice. I have in mind Heine's sketch of his father in his *Memoirs*. Written almost thirty years after his father's death, it can lay no claim to realistic accuracy. It is all the more valuable on that account as revealing the workings of the fancy that retouched the portrait.

Heine says that he loved his father most of all human beings. His pen portrait is therefore bound to render the characteristic traits that made his memory so beloved to his son. It is bound to reproduce qualities which in their combination impressed Heine as supremely winning and lovable. Analysis will show that the very qualities which made him treasure his father's memory were also most deeply rooted in his own nature. Quite unconsciously, perhaps, he superposed his own image upon that of his father in recording the impression of his father's temperament which lingered in his mind. One must read that sketch in its entirety (*Memoiren*, VII, 482-511) to appreciate in full how the traits that constituted Heine's being are here rendered in a more primitive eighteenth-century setting, in a modest environment of the *petite bourgeoisie*.

His father, as Heine remembers him, was endowed with a boundless joyousness of temperament. "Er war genussüchtig, frohsinnig, rosenlaunig. . . . Immer himmelblaue Heiterkeit und Fanfaren des Leichtsinns." In apparent contradiction with this lightheartedness stood a self-conscious, dignified gravity of deportment, a pose of solemnity and importance, which, though genuine, gave the most piquant flavor to his personality. "Jene Gravität war zwar nicht erborgt, aber sie erinnerte doch an jene antiken Basreliefs, wo ein heiteres Kind sich eine grosse tragische Maske vor das Antlitz hält." He had, in fact, the naïve simplicity of a child, combining with it a surprising depth of intuition. The quality of his voice enhanced this childlike character, suggesting forest sounds to Heine



by its peculiar timber. Consonant with the gravity of his demeanor was the sedulous care which he bestowed upon his body. In recalling the immaculate whiteness of his finely chiseled hand and the delicate flavor of almonds which emanated from it when Heine stooped to kiss it, he is almost moved to tears.

To this big eighteenth-century child, life was a great game in which he was absorbed with the same seriousness as a child in its play. Even his business was but a phase of this great make-believe game of seriousness. "Seine Tätigkeit war eigentlich nur eine unaufhörliche Geschäftigkeit." His trade in velveteens was managed not like a business but like a hobby. Uppermost in his mind was not a desire to profit but a desire to please.

This desire to please led him to practice the most generous liberality toward the poor of Düsseldorf. He gave with an open hand, and in his giving he displayed such intuitive tact and courtesy that he won the love of all the old mendicant women whose lot he lightened. But in addition he won their flattery, and this made him as happy as a king. The love of flattery was his most amiable weakness.

Da nun für schöne Männer, deren Spezialität darin besteht, dass sie schöne Männer sind, die Schmeichelei ein grosses Bedürfnis ist, und es ihnen dabei gleichgültig ist, ob der Weihrauch aus einem rosichten oder welken Munde kommt, wenn er nur stark und reinlich hervorquillt, so begreift man, wie mein teurer Vater, ohne eben darauf spekuliert zu haben, dennoch in seinem Verkehr mit den alten Damen ein gutes Geschäft machte.

Es ist unbegreiflich, wie gross oft die Dosis Weihrauch war, mit welcher sie ihn eindampften, und wie gut er die stärkste Portion vertragen konnte. Das war sein glückliches Temperament, durchaus nicht Einfalt. Er wusste sehr wohl, dass man ihm schmeichelte, aber er wusste auch, dass Schmeichelei wie Zucker immer süss ist, und er war wie das Kind, welches zu der Mutter sagt: Schmeichle mir ein bischen, sogar ein bischen zu viel [VII, 495].

If Heine's sketch of his father presents with any degree of fidelity the character of his parent, then it is obvious that the father was a complete impersonation of the Narcissus-type; then it appears also that it was either a hereditary predisposition or the force of example which fostered a similar development in his son. Quite apart, however, from any such hypothesis, the love with which Heine dwells on his father's smiling good humor, on his childlike gravity

of deportment, on his sedulous attention to his body, on his sense of unreality, face to face with the serious business of the world, on his liberality, his tact, his politeness, and on his craving for personal flattery—all this accentuates in the most striking manner the Narcissus-character of Heine's own temperament. Heine does not record these qualities of his father with any air of detachment; he does not assume the superior attitude of the benevolent critic. He speaks of them as one who is charmed by them to the utmost degree; as one who regards them as priceless treasures. He speaks as one who knows them not by observation from without but by intuition from within.<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me that Heine's Narcissus-character provided a natural bridge by means of which the transition from paganism to religious inwardness took place.

In 1848 the time had arrived when Heine could no longer conceal from himself the fact that his days of joy were numbered. He had had ample warning. The first signs of paralysis had made themselves felt in the early thirties. In 1843 matters became worse. For long periods physicians were in constant attendance. In 1845 the news of his uncle's will, which left him a miserable pittance instead of the comfortable annuity he had expected, precipitated a crisis. Death seemed imminent, but his nature triumphed. But then followed the long tenacious struggle in which, with the power lent by hate, Heine pitted all his resources against his relatives in order to compel them by fair means or foul, by flattery, by negotiation, by intimidation and public defamation to guarantee him the pension which he had enjoyed during his uncle's lifetime. He won out, but not before the poison of hate had done its deadly work upon his body. In 1848 he was a hopeless paralytic, facing death as the only hope of liberation from his tortures.

He could no longer pursue the enjoyment in which he had reveled. He could no longer pose as Bacchus, glorying in wine and sensuous beauty. But he still loved himself with all the passionate ardor of which his being was capable. He still loved his decrepit, enfeebled body, but he wanted to think of it as beautiful and pleasing

<sup>1</sup> Is there a more exquisite Narcissus fancy conceivable than Heine's picturing himself arrayed in the pontifical robes?

to the last. But with his eye set upon the beauty of robust health and bodily vigor—how could his helpless, wasted body help but revolt all his aesthetic sensibilities! The Hellenism which he had so exultantly proclaimed demanded that he avert his gaze from himself in pitying silence.

This situation brought Heine face to face with the most trying crisis of his life. Either that fondly nursed love for his bodily self must be uprooted, or he must abandon the aesthetic ideals which were his most characteristic contribution to the life of his age. He must either be true to his past self and await death in stoic blindness, or he must cast his past aside and embrace a new ideal of beauty with which to make something harmonious, noble, impressive, beautiful, winning, and lovable even out of the wreckage of his body. The crisis lasted until he knew that his fate was sealed. Then his self irresistibly gravitated toward the latter alternative.

Thus a mood of grave, tranquil, sometimes somber seriousness instinctively began to replace in Heine's heart the light-hearted laughter of his former days, as becoming to his altered status. Sallies of wit, choice conceits, bizarre anachronisms, flashes of fantastic humor adorn his language as of old—but now they occur as quaint arabesques traced against a background of solemn gravity. The poetry of the *Romanzero*, and the last poems, is that of a sage whose dying body is transfigured with a spiritual beauty. The seriousness of death pervades the very technique of Heine's most characteristic last productions, such as *Vitzliputzli*, *Spanische Atriden*, *Prinzessin Sabbath*, *Jehuda ben Halevy*, and *Bimini*. Here the concentration of Heine's earlier poetry is entirely wanting. There is none of the economy that makes for epigrammatic conclusions. The progression is leisurely; transitions are lengthy. There is frequent repetition without the character of refrain. Similes and metaphors trail and ramble without the least effort at compression. The rhymeless verse has not a trace of rhetorical pathos. It progresses with the calm precision of the most finely chiseled prose, in which no sound can be slurred without marring the euphony of the whole. The vocalic richness and often the very length of the exotic words with which the lines are studded add to their impressiveness. All haste is absent. Here is the grave leisurely calm,

the complete self-possession, the serene poise of the consummate self-conscious artist whose words bear the message of spiritual beauty. And the beauty of these poems casts its reflection on the bodily form of the heroic sufferer whose trembling hand traced out their perfect lines in the intervals of his agony. His pallid, bearded face with the half-closed eyelids appears more lovable than did ever the rosy countenance of Bacchus.

To speak of this mood of grave dignity which gradually superseded the wanton laughter of happier days as a pose, were to miss its true character. Pose implies conscious affectation, whereas here is an attitude which grew spontaneously out of the roots of Heine's being. One recalls how Heine's conscious self at first viewed with alarm the change preparing within him. On the other hand, Heine's sense of unreality in regard to issues applies equally to this sustained mood of solemn seriousness.

Steeped as Heine was in the atmosphere of this mood, the rebirth of his love for Judaism followed as a natural development. At the time of his Hellenism the Greek ideal had stood for joy, and Judaism had faced it frowning with the scowl of harsh asceticism. When there was no longer any room for joy, the contrast between the two great types of human ideals remained as pronounced as ever, but by a slight shifting of the point of view the harsh asceticism of Judaism softened into lofty sublimity.<sup>1</sup> As such it had assumed the aspect of an aesthetic phenomenon, inviting Heine's loving contemplation. He could now lose himself in the contemplation of the morality which was the essence of Judaism, not as a practical but as an aesthetic phenomenon on a par with the sensuous beauty of Greece. When Heine was still among the living, morality had faced him as an unlovely practical imperative; now, when only a feeble spark of life retarded the total dissolution of his body, morality was only a phenomenon passing before the mind's eye, no longer threatening with any practical demands upon his extinguished senses. Thus his Narcissus-love which prescribed grave solemnity as the becoming gesture of death turned his aesthetic contemplation upon a sphere where solemn seriousness reigned with undisputed sway. As

<sup>1</sup> The reader will recall that this transition is suggested by Kant's dichotomy of the aesthetic into the "beautiful" and the "sublime."

a poet to whom every idea transformed itself into a concrete symbolical vision, Heine expressed the quintessence of Judaism in the words: "Israel sass fromm unter seinem Feigenbaum und sang das Lob des unsichtbaren Gottes" (VI, 61).<sup>1</sup>

If the symbolism of this passage has made it strikingly clear that morality appealed to Heine as an aesthetic attitude and by no means as a practical postulate, it requires little imaginative insight to see that this aesthetic morality would have been meaningless without a God. Being essentially a contemplative worship of divine beauty, it would have been empty without a divine creator responsive to human adoration. There was more than mere affection in the horror with which Heine twenty years earlier had discussed Fichte's sternly practical postulate of morality in which God was replaced by the abstract concept of law. At that time he had written: "Der Fichtesche Idealismus gehört zu den kolossalsten Irrtümern, die jemals der menschliche Geist ausgeheckt. Er ist gottloser und verdammlicher als der plumpste Materialismus. So viel weiss ich, beide sind mir zuwider." And he had added: "Beide Ansichten sind auch antipoetisch" (IV, 276). If at that time a *moral* world without a God impressed Heine as monstrous and unpoetical, how much more must this have been the case now, when he identified himself with the spiritual beauty of Judaism which turned about the adoration of the Creator. The God of his forefathers satisfied his poet's craving for the tangible and the concrete. And true to his Narcissus-self in all things he retouched the portrait of the God of his fathers in conformity with his own image, making of him, as it were, a divine Narcissus.

<sup>1</sup> To appreciate the significance of this image one must bear in mind that Heine's imagination automatically concentrated the quintessence of a situation into a dramatic gesture. Helene Herrmann has pointed out the prevalence of "Die Geste des Untergangs" in the *Romanzen*. I quote a few striking examples of the dramatic gesture from other contexts:

"Es ist, als ob Rahel wusste, welche posthume Sendung ihr beschieden war. Sie glaubte freilich es würde besser werden und wartete; doch als des Wartens kein Ende nahm, schüttelte sie ungeduldig den Kopf, sah Varnhagen an, und starb schnell—um desto schneller auferstehn zu können" (I, 497).

Speaking of his failure to defend himself in 1848 against the insinuation that he had been bought by the French government: "Wer einen schönen Mantel besass, verhüllte darin sein Antlitz" (VI, 374).

On the abdication of Louis Philippe: "Als es galt, auf das Volk schiessen zu lassen, überschlich ihn die alte philanthropische Weichherzigkeit, und er warf die Krone von sich, ergriff seinen Hut und nahm seinen alten Regenschirm und seine Frau unter den Arm, und empfahl sich" (VI, 539).

The intimate interpenetration of religious emotion and Narcissus-love in Heine's inner world found its most beautiful expression in the *Jehuda ben Halevy* of the *Hebrew Melodies*. The hero of the poem is ostensibly a pious Jewish poet of medieval Spain, but in reality the portrait of Jehuda bears Heine's own idealized features. Such lines as

Ich erkannt' ihn an der bleichen  
Und gedankenstolzen Stirne,  
An der Augen süßer Starrheit—  
Sahn mich an so schmerzlich forschend—

Doch zumeist erkannt' ich ihn  
An dem rätselhaften Lächeln  
Jener schön gereimten Lippen,  
Die man nur bei Dichtern findet [I, 438],

show Heine contemplating his own countenance transfigured with spiritual beauty. And in the following lines the sudden transition from the third person to the first removes even the thin veil of fiction:

Rein und wahrhaft, sonder Makel  
War sein Lied, wie seine Seele—  
Als der Schöpfer sie erschaffen,  
Diese Seele, selbstzufrieden

Küsste er die schöne Seele,  
Und des Kusses holder Nachklang  
Bebt in jedem Lied des Dichters,  
Das geweiht durch diese Gnade.

Wie im Leben, so im Dichten  
Ist das höchste Gut die Gnade—  
Wer sie hat, der kann nicht sünd'gen  
Nicht in Versen, noch in Prosa.

Solchen Dichter von der Gnade  
Gottes nennen wir Genie;  
Unverantwortlicher König  
Des Gedankenreiches ist er.

Nur dem Gotte steht er Rede,  
Nicht dem Volke—In der Kunst,  
Wie im Leben kann das Volk  
Töten uns, doch niemals richten [I, 443].

Has ever poet conceived a more far-reaching apotheosis of his soul and of his art!

And when Heine extols the song of Jehuda as costlier than priceless pearls, to what songs but his own does he pay this tribute!

Doch die Perlen hier im Kästchen  
Sind entquollen einer schönen  
Menschenseele, die noch tiefer,  
Abgrundtiefer als das Weltmeer—

Denn es sind die Thränenperlen  
Des Jehuda ben Halevy,  
Die er ob dem Untergang  
Von Jerusalem geweinet—

Perlenthänen, die verbunden  
Durch des Reimes goldnen Faden,  
Aus der Dichtkunst güldnen Schmiede  
Als ein Lied hervorgegangen [I, 454].

Perhaps here the destruction of Jerusalem is even felt as a symbol of the destruction of the splendid temple of his body. But Heine's Narcissus-love reaches its climax in the delicious picture of the martyred poet's reception into heaven:

Droben, heisst es, harrete seiner  
Ein Empfang, der schmeichelhaft  
Ganz besonders für den Dichter,  
Eine himmlische Überraschung.

Festlich kam das Chor der Engel  
Ihm entgegen mit Musik,  
Und als Hymne grüßten ihn  
Seine eignen Verse, jenes.

Synagogen-Hochzeitskarmen,  
Jene Sabbath-Hymnen,  
Mit den jauchzend wohlbekannten  
Melodien—welche Töne!

Englein bliesen auf Hoboen,  
Englein spielten Violine,  
Andre strichen auch die Bratsche  
Oder schlugen Pauk' und Zimbel.



Und das sang und klang so lieblich,  
 Und so lieblich in den weiten  
 Himmelshallen widerhallt es;  
 Lecho Daudi Likras Kalle [I, 456].

What a priceless comfort the presence of such a thoughtful father in heaven must have been to the dying poet! What a precious part of his soul unfolded itself at the price of those years of agony!

The Narcissus-complex of Heine's personality has revealed itself as the force that brought the poet back to God. What seemed at first a perplexing puzzle, devoid of inner logic, at best an irrational caprice, has taken on the aspect of a gradual psychological development. It has become apparent that Heine's return to God did not involve the disintegration of his inmost self. His real self triumphed over all adversities and maintained itself to the last.

Pathologists tell us that all inversions of the sex impulse, psychic as well as physical, have their roots in the life of the child. They involve a stoppage of the normal development and a fixation of the character of childhood.<sup>1</sup> Thus Heine's Narcissus-character reveals him as a perpetual child. He was a great child in his attitude toward the serious issues of life, despite his wonderful art. In his childlikeness lies the secret of his greatness as well as that of his limitations. His child's quickness of perception, his child's keenness of intuition, and his childlike frankness made him at the same time the most colorful and the most subtly introspective of Romantic poets. But his childlike instinct for play rendered him unfit for the task of solving any of the serious social or religious problems of civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Recent psychology has tended to see in conversion a reversion to the mental life of the child (cf. A. Adler, *The Neurotic Constitution*, [London, 1919]). At first sight this view would seem not to apply in the case of Heine's gravitation toward religion, since the environment of his childhood did not favor the cultivation of any deep religiosity—Jewish, Catholic, and free-thinking influences pouring in upon him in quick succession. Strictly speaking, therefore, the religious life of his childhood can not be said to have re-emerged. Nevertheless, if it is true that Heine's Narcissus-love prompted his return to God, it follows that here also it was a childhood complex which conditioned the transformation.

N HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED POEM BY FRIEDRICH  
VON SCHILLER

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In the summer of 1904 I purchased of Friedrich Strobel in Jena an album of prose and verse, in the handwriting of Caroline Junot (née Schiller), the oldest daughter of Friedrich Schiller. Among other interesting jottings and fragments, it contains the following hitherto unpublished poem, ascribed by the author of the album to her father. There appears no valid reason for doubting the genuineness of the poem, which Caroline designates specifically as *unpublished*, however difficult it may be to fix the date of its composition:

Ist's ein Geschenk, dasz an den Staub gekettet  
Wir durch den Wink des Unerforschten sind?  
Wenn er uns nicht von der Vernichtung rettet,  
In die des Lebens letzter Hauch verrinnt?

Ist's ein Geschenk, ein Leben, das im Werden  
Schon winselnd mit des Todes Schrecken ringt?  
Wenn nicht die Zukunft nach dem Kampf auf Erden  
Uns tröstend wie die Morgenröte winkt?

Wenn nicht für vieles unverdientes Leiden  
Zum süßen Lohn der Ewige uns weckt?  
Wenn nicht den Schurken im Genuss der Freuden  
Der Zukunft Donnerstimme niederschreckt?

Der Geist versinkt in diesem Zweifelmeere.  
Kein milder Stern in dieser dunkeln Nacht.  
Wer kennt den Kompass, der den Pfad uns lehre  
Zu jenem Lande, das der Tod bewacht?

Du, sanfter Glaube, von Vernunft geleitet,  
Du, ew'ger Führer auf der finstern Bahn,  
Nur du hast die Versich'ung mir bereitet,  
Dasz ich des künft'gen Seins mich freuen kann.

Du hellst die dunkeln Zweifel meiner Seele,  
 Du leitest aus dem Irrsal meinen Geist,  
 Du siehst es, dasz ich mich vergebens quäle,  
 Da alles hin auf ew'ge Dauer weist.

Du lösest das geheimnisvolle Siegel,  
 Das uns das Buch der Ewigkeit verschlieszt;  
 Du zeigest uns der Gottheit heil'gen Spiegel,  
 Wo uns die Blume schöner Zukunft sprieszt.

The argumentative religious tone of these lines points to their early composition as an expression of the poet's view of human life. They are apparently an elaborate formulation of the thought contained in Schiller's four-line epigram, copied by the poet's brother-in-law, Reinwald, and contained in Christophine's posthumous papers. This epigram, published by Bellermann (*Schillers Werke*, IX, 66) as No. 32, *Zuversicht der Unsterblichkeit*, in the *Anthologie auf das Jahr 1782*, reads as follows:

Zum neuen Leben ist der Tote hier entstanden,  
 Das weisz und glaub' ich festiglich,  
 Mich lehren's schon die Weisen ahnden,  
 Und Schurken überzeugen mich.

The common argument for personal immortality, based upon the need of another life for the divine punishment of the prosperously and joyously wicked in this life (cf. the third stanza of the poem and the final line of the epigram) suggests a genetic connection between the two expressions of religious faith. The epigram is terser and artistically maturer than the stanzas of the poem. Without attempting to fix more definitely the date of either, I am inclined to regard the epigram as Schiller's later and final formulation of the thought of the earlier poem.

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